

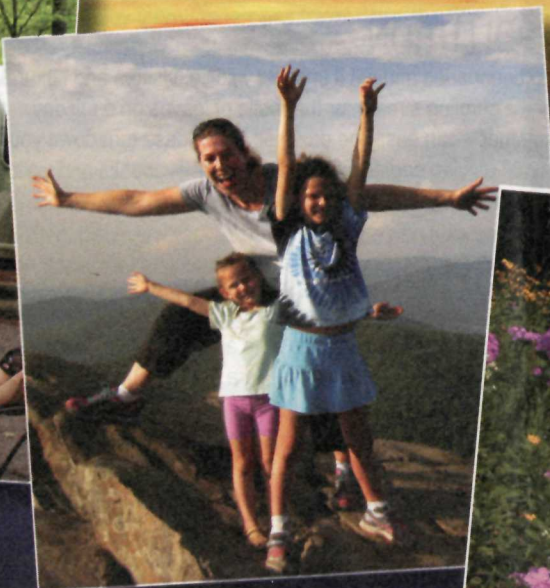
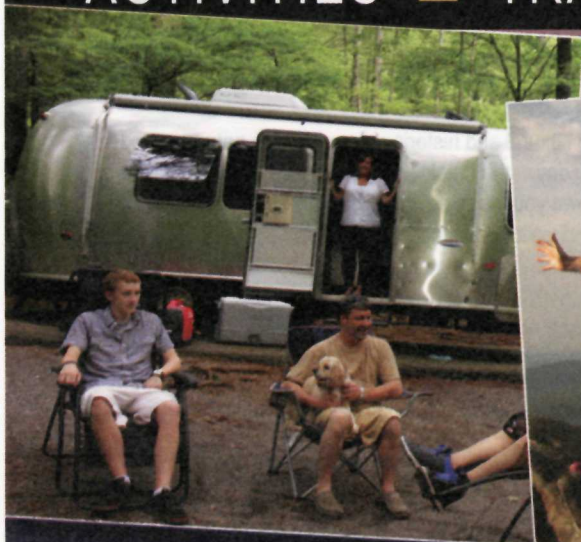


Blue Ridge Parkway

OUTDOOR

Guide

ACTIVITIES ■ TRAILS ■ PLANTS & WILDLIFE ■ BIKING ■ DRIVING



**FACILITIES &
ACTIVITIES - Pg 3**

**HIKING
TRAILS -**

► **Virginia:
Pgs 4, 6 - 14**

► **North Carolina:
Pgs 5, 15 - 22**

**PLANTS &
WILDLIFE -
Pgs 12 - 13**

BIKING - Pg 23

**DRIVING TIPS -
Pgs 2 & 24**



TIPS For a Safe & Enjoyable Trip

The Blue Ridge Parkway is one of 400 National Parks across the nation. To help protect and preserve the Blue Ridge Parkway, yourself, and others, observe all park regulations. Be alert and report vehicle accidents, safety hazards, and uncontrolled fire to the nearest ranger station. See pg 3 for the list of ranger station/visitor centers by milepost. **For emergencies call 911.**

ALL NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED -

Leave wildflowers and other vegetation in their natural condition for others to enjoy. Do not disturb animal or plant life in any way. Hunting and trapping of animals is prohibited. Do not interfere with animals by feeding, touching, or frightening them. Do not cut, deface, or damage trees. In addition, historic sites are also part of the Parkway experience and these are protected for the visitors' enjoyment just like plants and animals. You can pick up to a gallon of nuts, berries, fruit, and mushrooms per day for personal consumption.

CELLPHONES - Do not attempt to talk or text while driving. Safely pull over to the road shoulder and stop before using your device. Cell service/signal is unreliable or unavailable along most of the Parkway.

CAMPING - Camping is permitted only in park campgrounds or designated back-country sites. Fires are permitted in the provided grills or fire pits in campgrounds and picnic areas only. Leave your campsite in better condition than you found it!

FIRES - Fires are only permitted in designated receptacles in campgrounds and picnic areas. Only certified heat treated firewood may be transported onto National Park Service property. Dead - downed - detached wood nearby your site may be gathered to burn provided no axes/saws are used.

LITTER - Please deposit all litter in the trash cans provided at trail heads, parking overlooks, picnic areas or simply take it back home with you for proper disposal.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES -

Possession of open containers of alcohol in vehicles is prohibited. Alcohol is permitted in campgrounds by registered campers and in picnic areas until 9:00 PM. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in overlooks. Please do not litter and dispose of empty containers appropriately.

PETS - The Parkway is pet friendly. All pets must be on a 6-foot leash or under physical restraint at all times while in the Park. Dogs also frighten hikers and chase wildlife. If a pet cannot be kept under control, it should be left at home. Do not leave pets unattended in locked vehicles for their health and safety.

RECREATIONAL DRONES -

Launching, landing, operating an unmanned aircraft from or on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service within the boundaries of the Blue Ridge Parkway is prohibited.

ROADSIDE PARKING - Parking is allowed on road shoulders where not otherwise signed as prohibited. Please avoid wet areas and make sure that all four wheels are safely off the pavement and not blocking any gates.

BICYCLING - Bicycles and motorized vehicles are not permitted on Parkway trails. See page 23 for more bicycling information.

PARKWAY LAKES AND PONDS

These are for fishing and scenic beauty only, with no swimming or boating allowed with the exception of Price Lake canoeing. Nearby U.S. Forest Service recreation areas, state parks, and mountain resorts often have swimming facilities.

RESOURCE ISSUES ALONG THE PARKWAY

While many people think of the Blue Ridge Parkway as just a motor road, it is also a place of varied and significant natural resources. Along the Parkway route, an unsurpassed diversity of climate zones, vegetation zones, physiographic zones, and geological features are traversed.

The more than 88,000 acres of Parkway lands pass through a highland area that includes 400 streams (150 headwaters), 47 Natural Heritage Areas (areas set aside as national, regional or state examples of exemplary natural communities), a variety of slopes and exposures, and nearly 100 different soil types. With an elevation varying from 649 feet at James River in Virginia to 6,047 feet at Richland Balsam in North Carolina, the Parkway provides a home for both southern species at the lower elevations and northern species on the mountain tops.

Here are a few of the problems and issues park staff are working on...

■ NOISE POLLUTION

Noise knows no boundaries and yet it impacts wildlife, visitors and cultural and historic resources. The natural sounds of the Parkway – a gurgling stream, or the rustle of leaves on a fall day... the crackling of a campfire or the pounding of a blacksmith hammer – can easily be drowned out. Please turn down your radio or roll up car windows when traveling the Parkway; avoid revving engines and limit idling at overlooks and visitor destination sites to help preserve the Parkway's soundscape.

■ INVASIVE SPECIES

Non-native plants and animals are aggressive invaders into natural areas. Because of its linear nature, the Blue Ridge Parkway is susceptible to invasive species from adjacent lands. Invasive species outcompete and displace native plants and can eliminate them from our local flora. Exotic vines such as kudzu, Japanese honeysuckle and oriental bittersweet prevent mature native forests from developing. Several non-native animals can also pose problems to our native species. Eastern bluebird populations dropped significantly as the more aggressive European starlings took over available nesting cavities. Introduced brown and rainbow trout have displaced brook trout from many aquatic systems, forcing native trout to move further upstream. The list of non-natives extends down to invertebrates, including some earthworms and crayfish, and even fungi.

■ FOREST DECLINE

The hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) is a non-native insect that has killed over 50% of the hemlocks along the Parkway. At higher elevations, the Fraser Fir is similarly impacted by the balsam woolly adelgid (*Adelges piceae*). These once prevalent trees provide nesting sites for birds and shade critical to many forest and stream species. Although the adelgid will not be eradicated, biologists have used biological and chemical controls to help reduce their spread.

■ AIR QUALITY

Visitors have traveled the Parkway for years enjoying majestic views and distant horizons. These views have become less majestic as pollution gets in the way and haze blocks the distant scenes. Over the last half century, visibility along the Blue Ridge has decreased 40% in the winter and 80% in the summer due to poor air quality. Man-made pollutants come from within and outside the Southern Appalachians, often traveling hundreds of miles. While the decreased views are noticeable, there are also other impacts that cannot be seen. Acid rain caused by burning fossil fuels, is probably the type of air pollution familiar to most people.

PARKWAY BY THE NUMBERS

Along the Parkway, you will see numbered mileposts. The 0 milepost marker is at Rockfish Gap immediately south of Shenandoah National Park. Each mile is numbered progressively southward on the Parkway to its southernmost point at milepost 469 at Cherokee.





ACTIVITIES ALONG THE PARKWAY

Ranger-led Programs

Campfire talks, historic craft demonstrations, live music performances, guided hikes and other outdoor adventures are some of the activities you and your family can enjoy. Most programs are offered on weekends June through October. Topics vary from one place to another and also may change from week to week. Schedules are posted at visitor centers, campgrounds, restaurants, lodges, and at www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/calendar.htm



Become A Junior Ranger

Junior Ranger programs are offered at most developed areas. Any child can complete activities in the Parkway Junior Ranger booklet while promising to help care for and learn about America's National Parks so that others in the future may enjoy them. As families travel down the Blue Ridge Parkway, children can learn more about this National Park, what makes it special, and earn their own certificate and a Junior Ranger badge.



Kids in Parks

The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's Kids in Parks TRACK Trails program is a network of self-guided hiking trails on and in communities along the Parkway. Each trail has a series of brochures designed to turn an ordinary hike into a fun-filled, discovery-packed adventure. Kids who hike these trails can register on the Kids in Parks website to win prizes that make their next outdoor adventure more fun. Visit the five TRACK Trails on the Blue Ridge Parkway at the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center in Asheville, Peaks of Otter, Julian Price Park, and the Blue Ridge Music Center. Look for new track trails at Rocky Knob and James River later this summer. *Learn more at <http://kidsinparks.com/>.*



BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER

The Blue Ridge Music Center, a major venue along Virginia's Heritage Music Trail called the Crooked Road, is only 12 miles from Galax, VA. Located at milepost 213 on the Parkway and in the shadow of Fisher Peak, it is one of the great gathering places for friends, neighbors and Parkway travelers who come here to experience live performances of traditional regional music and learn about its roots.

During the visitor season (May - October) you can enjoy Mid Day Mountain Music daily from noon to 4pm, a summer concert series, workshops, and talks. Call ahead to check on the program schedule (276-236-5309).

The award-winning Roots of American Music exhibit traces the history of Blue Ridge music back through the generations to its European and West African origins, and shows how it continues to influence folk and popular music today. Meet new friends, talk to the musicians, and become a part of this special musical tradition. Go to www.blueridgemusiccenter.org for more concert information.

See Page 11 for Music Center trails accessing high elevation wetlands, rich displays of rhododendron, creeks, and an abundance of wildflowers.

Mid Day Mountain Music



FACILITIES

Most are open May through Oct. To inquire about specific facilities please contact Park Headquarters at (828) 348-3400

	Milepost	Visitor Center	Camping	Exhibits	Programs	Restrooms	Picnic Area
Humpback Rocks 540-943-4716	5.8	H		H	HP	H	HP
Otter Creek	60.9			HP	H	HP	
James River 434-299-5496	63.8	H		X	H	HP	X
Peaks of Otter* 540-586-4496	86	H	HP	H	H	H	HP
Explore Park Visitor Ctr 540-427-1800	115	H		H		H	
Roanoke Picnic Area	120.4				H	HP	HP
Smart View	154.5					H	H
Rocky Knob 540-745-9662	169	H	HP		HP	HP	HP
Mabry Mill **	176.1			HP	HP	HP	
Ground Hog Mt.	189					HP	H
Blue Ridge Music Ctr 276-236-5309	213	H		H	H	H	
Cumberland Knob	217.5					HP	HP
Brinegar Cabin	238.5			HP	HP		
Doughton Park	241.1	H	HP	HP	HP	HP	HP
NW Trading Post	258.6					H	
Jeffress Park	272					HP	HP
Moses Cone Memorial Park 828-295-3782	294.1	H		H	H	H	
Price Park	297.1		HP		H	HP	H
Linn Cove Viaduct 828-733-1354	304.4	H		H		H	
Linville Falls 828-765-1045	316.4	H	HP	H	X	HP	HP
Minerals Museum 828-765-2761	331	H		H	H	H	
Crabtree Falls	339.5		HP			HP	HP
Craggy Gardens	364.6	H		H		HPA	HP
Folk Art Center 828-298-0495	382	H		H	H	H	H
Blue Ridge Pkwy Visit Ctr 828-298-5330	382	H		H	H	H	H
Mt. Pisgah*	408.6		HP		HP	HP	HP
Waterrock Knob	451.2	H		H	H	H	HP

H=Wheelchair Accessible • HP=Accessible with Assistance
X=Not Accessible to the Handicapped
HPA = Located in picnic area. • * Lodging and Dining Available
** Dining Available

For more information about trip planning and camping go to:
www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/things2do.htm

TRAILS

NORTH CAROLINA & VIRGINIA TRAILS

A journey on the Blue Ridge Parkway offers motorists spectacular views of southern Appalachia's diverse beauty. The Parkway, for 469 uninterrupted miles, displays blue-misted mountains, cascading waterfalls, rolling pastures, and gorges banked with wildflowers. The Parkway offers hikers of all skill levels the opportunity to explore more than 100 varied and intriguing trails in North Carolina and Virginia.

Meandering alongside and crossing the scenic motor road, the trails provide a close-up look at some of the most beautiful wilderness in the country. Many trails wind their way through unique biological and geological environments. Others lead to historic sites with stories of the people who have shaped our heritage. Many Parkway trails continue onto Forest Service and private land. Please respect all these lands and treat them with care.

IMPORTANT ADVICE

- Lock valuables in the trunk of your car or take them with you.
- Hiking shoes or boots are recommended for most trails, especially for the more strenuous sites. Steep and rocky areas and slippery stream crossings require extra attention and careful footing. Even for trails marked "easy," it is advisable to wear flat or rubber-soled shoes for comfort and good traction. Wearing sandals, "flip-flops," or high heels can result in accidents.
- Sudden changes in weather are common in these mountains. Even in mild seasons, rapid dips in temperature and unexpected thunderstorms occur frequently, and at higher elevations the wind and temperature can carry a surprising chill. Be prepared for weather changes by bringing along suitable clothing.
- For your safety and the protection of the natural features of the landscape, stay on established trails. Shortcutting at switchbacks causes soil erosion, disfigures the trail, and makes it difficult for other hikers to find their way. Take advantage of log walkways, steps or other trail construction. They are there to minimize human impact on the natural environment.
- Do not drink the water in streams or springs. Diseases can be contracted by drinking untreated waters. Water is available seasonally at many Parkway facilities.
- Lost and found articles should be reported to a Park Ranger.

REGULATIONS

- Parking is limited to designated parking areas or road shoulders. All four wheels must be safely off the pavement. Do not block any gates or access roads.
- Dogs and other pets must be on a leash or under physical restraint at all times while in the park. The territorial instinct of dogs can lead to fights with other dogs on the trail. Dogs can also frighten hikers and chase wildlife.
- Deposit all litter in trash cans or recycling bins.
- Metal detectors are prohibited in all National Park areas.
- Natural resources are protected. Do not disturb animal or plant life in any way. Hunting and trapping are prohibited. Do not interfere with animals by feeding, touching or frightening them. Do not cut, deface or damage trees. Leave wildflowers and other vegetation in their natural condition for other hikers to enjoy.
- Historic resources are protected as well. Do not damage, remove, or deface any of these structures, artifacts, furnishings, or exhibits.

Checklist

- Get the latest Parkway information at www.nps.gov/BLRI
- Bring day packs with water bottles, snacks, maps, sunscreen, and compass.
- Pack clothes that can be layered and be prepared for cool temperatures.
- Review park regulations and safety information.
- Bring camera, binoculars, sunglasses, field guides and first aid supplies.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.

VIRGINIA TRAILS

Trail charts: Mileage indicates length of trail one-way unless otherwise noted.

MP	Name and Description	Dist	Level
5.9	Farm Museum Trail (self-guiding, from Humpback Visitor Center to farm)	0.25	Easy
6.0	Appalachian Trail (Humpback Gap parking area to Humpback - Elevation—3650 feet)	2.0	Strenuous
8.4	Catoctin Loop trail (leg stretcher)	0.3	Moderate
8.8	Greenstone Trail (self-guiding; Greenstone geology formation; oak hickory forest) - Round Trip	0.2	Moderate
17.6	The Priest (view)	0.1	Easy
18.5	White Rock Falls Trail Connection	2.9	Moderate
20.0	White Rock Falls Trail (follows stream to small falls)	0.9	Moderate
26.3	Big Spy Mountain (view into Shenandoah Valley; good for sky watching) - Round Trip	0.1	Moderate
34.4	Yankee Horse (to logging RR exhibit & small waterfall) - Round Trip	0.2	Moderate
38.8	Boston Knob (leg stretcher)	0.1	Easy
47.5	Indian Gap (to Indian Rocks; good seasonal rhododendron display)	0.3	Moderate
55.2	White Oak Flats (leg stretcher)	0.1	Easy
60.8	Otter Creek Trail (begin at Otter Creek Campground)	3.5	Moderate
63.1	Otter Lake Trail (around Otter Lake)	0.8	Moderate
63.6	James River Trail (self-guiding to canal locks)*	0.2	Easy
63.6	Trail of Trees Trail (self-guiding to James River Overlook) - Round Trip*	0.5	Moderate
74.7	Thunder Ridge Trail (leg stretcher loop to view of Arnold Valley)	0.1	Easy
78.4	Apple Orchard Falls Trail (Sunset Field Overlook to view of Apple Orchard Falls; National Recreation Trail)	1.2	Strenuous
79.7	Onion Mountain Loop trail (leg stretcher through Appalachian deciduous forest with rhododendron display)	0.1	Easy
83.1	Fallingwater Cascades Trail (National Recreation Trail; loop to view of cascades)	1.6	Moderate
83.5	Flat Top Trail (leads to highest of three prominent peaks in area)	4.4	Strenuous
	Cross Rock Trail (spur off Flat Top Trail; unique geological features)	0.1	Moderate
85.7	Abbott Lake Trail (loop around Abbott Lake) *	1.0	Easy
85.9	Elk Run Trail (self-guiding loop nature trail from Visitor center)	0.8	Easy
85.9	Johnson Farm Loop trail (loop to restored farm) *	2.1	Moderate
85.9	Harkening Hill Trail (elevation-3300 feet; begin at Peaks Visitor center)	3.3	Moderate
	Balance Rock (spur trail off Harkening Hill Trail; unique geological formations)		
86.0	Sharp Top Trail (from camp store to summit of Sharp Top Mtn; Elevation-3875 feet; 360-degree panoramic view)	1.6	Strenuous
92.5	Appalachian Trail (VA 695 to Sharp Top Mtn. Overlook to Harvey's Knob Overlook)	2.9	Moderate
95.4	Appalachian Trail (Montvale Overlook to Taylor's Mountain Overlook)	1.0	Moderate
96.0	Spec Mine Trail (USFS Trail begins near Montvale Overlook, to State Rt. 6454 in Botetourt County)	2.8	Strenuous
97.0	Appalachian Trail (Taylor's Mtn. Overlook to Blackhorse Gap)	0.8	Moderate
110.6	Stewarts Knob Trail (view)	1.2	Moderate
114.9	Roanoke River Trail (self-guiding river loop)	0.35	Easy
120.4	Roanoke Mountain Summit Trail (view)	0.11	Moderate
120.5	Chestnut Ridge Trail (adjacent to Roanoke Mtn. campground)	5.4	Moderate
121.4	Roanoke Valley Horse Trail (begins at U.S. Hwy 220 and parallels Parkway to Milepost 115.7) (no access across Roanoke River)	5.9	Moderate
123.2	Buck Mountain Trail (to summit view)	0.53	Moderate
154.5	Smart View Loop trail (around picnic area)	2.6	Moderate
167.1	Rock Castle Gorge Trail (loop from campground along ridge over Rocky Knob and into gorge for 10.8-mile return to campground)	10.8	Strenuous
169	Black Ridge Trail (Rocky Knob Visitor center to Black Ridge to Grassy Knoll and Back to Visitor center)	3.1	Moderate
169.0	Rocky Knob Picnic Loop trail (leg stretcher around picnic area)*	1.0	Easy
176.2	Mabry Mill Trail (to Mill, log cabin, other outdoor exhibits) - Round Trip	0.5	Easy
179.2	Round Meadow Creek Loop trail (walk through a stream bottom forest)	0.5	Moderate
213.0	High Meadow Trail (leg stretcher) *	1.35	Easy
213.0	Fisher Peak Loop	2.24	Moderate



NORTH CAROLINA TRAILS

MP	Name and Description	Dist	Level
217.5	Cumberland Knob Trail (ideal lazy-day walk)	0.5	Easy
217.5	Gully Creek Trail (rewarding loop that meanders by stream)	2.0	Strenuous
218.6	Fox Hunters Paradise Trail (view)	0.2	Easy
230.1	Little Glad Millpond (easy loop stroll around pond)	0.4	Easy
238.5	Cedar Ridge Trail (great for day hike; vistas and forests)	4.2	Moderate
238.5	Bluff Mountain Trail (parallels Parkway to Milepost 244.7)	7.5	Moderate
241.0	Fodder Stack Trail (great variety of plants)	1.0	Moderate
243.7	Grassy Gap Fire Road (wide enough for side-by-side hiking)	6.5	Moderate
243.7	Basin Creek Trail (access from back-country campground)	3.3	Moderate
244.7	Flat Rock Ridge Trail (forest path with vistas)	5.0	Moderate
260.3	Jumpingoff Rocks Trail (forest path to vista)	1.0	Easy
264.4	The Lump Trail (to hilltop view)	0.3	Easy
271.9	Cascades Trail (self-guiding loop to view of falls)	0.5	Moderate
272.5	Tompkins Knob Trail (to Jesse Brown Cabin)	0.6	Easy
294.0	Rich Mountain Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	4.3	Moderate
294.0	Flat Top Mountain Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	3.0	Moderate
294.0	Watkins Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	3.3	Easy/Moderate
294.0	Black Bottom Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	0.5	Easy
294.0	Bass Lake Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	1.7	Easy
294.0	Deer Park Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	0.8	Moderate
294.0	Maze Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	2.3	Moderate
294.0	Duncan Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	2.5	Moderate
294.0	Rock Creek Bridge Carriage, Horse & Hiking Trail	1.0	Easy
294.1	Figure 8 Trail (short self-guiding loop around nature trail)	0.7	Easy
294.6	Trout Lake Hiking & Horse Trail (loop)	1.0	Easy
295.9	Green Knob Trail (to Green Knob)	2.3	Moderate/Strenuous
296.5	Boone Fork Trail (stream, forest, and meadows) *	5.5	Moderate/Strenuous
297.0	Price Lake Loop trail (loop around Price Lake) *	2.7	Moderate
304.4	Linn Cove Viaduct Access Trail	0.16	Easy
305.2	Beacon Heights Trail (10 minutes to view)	0.2	Moderate
305.5	Tanawha Trail (diverse features; parallels Parkway to Price Park)	13.5	Moderate/Strenuous
308.2	Flat Rock Trail (self-guiding loop)	0.6	Easy
315.5	Camp Creek Trail (leg stretcher through laurel and rhododendron)	0.1	Easy
316.4	Linville Falls Trail (view of upper falls)	0.8	Moderate
316.4	Linville Gorge Trail (view of lower falls)	0.5	Strenuous
316.4	Duggers Creek Trail (loop to view of Duggers Falls)	0.25	Easy
316.5	Linville River Bridge Trail (leg stretcher to view of unusual bridge)	0.1	Easy
320.8	Chestoa View Trail (30-minute loop to vista)	0.6	Easy
339.5	Crabtree Falls Loop trail (loop to view of falls)	2.5	Strenuous
344.1	Woods Mountain Trail (USFS)	2.0	Moderate
350.4	Lost Cove Ridge Trail (USFS)	0.6	Moderate
351.9	Deep Gap Trail (USFS)	0.2	Easy
355.0	Bald Knob Ridge Trail (USFS)	0.1	Easy
359.8	Big Butt Trail (USFS) (trail continues on USFS lands)	0.2	Strenuous
361.2	Glassmine Falls (view of Falls)	0.05	Moderate
364.2	Craggy Pinnacle Trail (to panoramic view)	0.7	Moderate
364.8	Craggy Gardens Trail	0.8	Moderate
374.4	Rattlesnake Lodge Trail (woodland walk)	0.5	Moderate
382.0	Mountain-to-Sea Trail/MTS Trail (Folk Art Center to Mt. Mitchell; spring wildflowers and views; parallels parkway; many accesses to trail segments)		Moderate/Strenuous
384	Visitor Center Loop	1.2	Easy
393.7	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Bent Creek-Walnut Cove)	3.1	Strenuous
396.4	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Walnut Cove-Sleepy Gap)	1.7	Moderate
397.3	Grassy Knob Trail (steep trail to USFS area)	0.9	Strenuous

FISHING PARKWAY WATERS

A mountaintop park may seem an unlikely place to fish, but just the opposite is true. The National Park Service protects over 100 miles of streams, many of them small, spring-fed watercourses that rise along the spine of the Blue Ridge. In addition, planners designed 13 artificial lakes along the Parkway to enhance the natural beauty of the scenic drive. These streams and lakes hold a special interest for those trying to enhance their Parkway experience by searching out native or stocked fish in a mountain environment.

LICENSES AND REGULATIONS

Fishing is permitted in Parkway waters with a valid state fishing license from either North Carolina or Virginia. No special trout stamp or license is needed and persons under age 16 can fish without a license when accompanied by an adult. Only single hook, artificial lures may be used. No fish eggs, minnows or amphibians are allowed. Fishing is not permitted from footbridges, dams or adjacent walls. In trout waters, regulations are posted at the stream bank and are in effect for that stream only. On all Parkway waters, fishing is allowed from 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset. Digging for bait on Parkway land is not allowed. Be aware that many streams meander onto U.S. Forest Service or private land and regulations will vary as the jurisdiction changes.

CATCH AND RELEASE "Your Future & Theirs"

"Catch and release" fishing is growing in popularity around the world among environmentally sensitive fishermen. The thrill of landing a beautiful fish and releasing it to its native habitat is a rewarding feeling for many anglers. Barbless hooks and minimal handling help ensure that the fish will survive a catch and live to reproduce or provide sport for another day. A photograph of your catch can be just as rewarding as "taking home the kill." Although the law does not require "catch and release" on all streams, the habit is one that will ensure healthy populations of species for future generations.

SPECIES OF FISH FOUND IN PARKWAYS STREAMS AND LAKES

Most of the lakes on the Blue Ridge Parkway support warm water species such as bass, bream, or bluegill. In Parkway streams, a variety of species of trout may be found:

- **Brown trout** have been stocked in eastern streams since the late nineteenth century. These golden colored trout are not native to the Appalachian mountains.
- **Rainbow trout** have been stocked in eastern streams as sport fish as well. These beautiful fish with the pink stripe down the side are originally native to the western United States.
- **Brook trout** are the only native trout in the southern Appalachians. This small fish with beautiful orange and red markings has survived many changes in its habitat during the centuries that humans have occupied the Blue Ridge. *Catching a "Brookie" is an experience that most anglers carry with them for a lifetime.*

397.3	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Sleepy Gap-Chestnut Cove)	0.7	Moderate
398.3	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Chestnut Cover-Bent Creek Gap)	2.8	Strenuous
400.3	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Bent Creek Gap-Beaver Dam Gap)	1.9	Moderate
401.7	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Beaver Dam Gap-Stoney Bald)	0.9	Moderate
402.6	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Stoney Bald-Big Ridge)	1.2	Strenuous
403.6	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Big Ridge-Mills River Valley)	1.1	Moderate/Strenuous
404.5	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Mills River Valley-Elk Pasture Gap)	1.2	Strenuous
405.5	Shut-In Trail/MTS Trail (Elk Pasture Gap-Mt. Pisgah)	1.7	Strenuous
407.6	Mt. Pisgah Trail (summit View)	1.3	Moderate/Strenuous
407.6	Buck Springs Trail	1.1	Easy/Moderate
409.6	Frying Pan Trail	0.7	Moderate/Strenuous
417	East Fork Trail (USFS, access to Shining Rock Trail System)	0.1	Easy/Moderate
418.8	Graveyard Fields Loop Trail (loop by a stream)	2.3	Moderate
419.4	John Rock Trail (Leg stretcher to view)	0.1	Easy
422.4	Devil's Courthouse Trail (panoramic ssummit view)	0.4	Moderate/Strenuous
427.6	Bear Pen Gap Trail (access to Mountains-by-the-Sea Trail)	0.2	Easy
431.0	Richland Balsam Trail	1.5	Moderate
433.8	Roy Taylor Overlook Trail (paved trail to overlook)	0.1	Easy
451.2	Waterrock Knob Trail (summit view; 6 mile one way)	1.2	Moderate/Strenuous



* This trail is also designated as a **TRACK Trail**
(See page 3)

Blue Ridge Parkway

HUMPBACK ROCKS MP 6

Humpback Rocks Trail

begins at the south end of the Humpback Gap parking area (milepost 6) and provides access to Humpback Rocks (1 mile), the summit of Humpback Mountain (2 miles), and the Humpback Rocks Picnic Area (3.9 miles). Follow the blue blaze gravel trail just right of the bulletin board to begin the strenuous 700 foot ascent to Humpback Rocks to enjoy sweeping views of the valley and mountains beyond.

Continue on the Appalachian Trail south (white blazes) to reach the summit of Humpback Mountain (2 miles one way) and the Humpback Rocks picnic area beyond (3.9 miles one way).

Hikers can enjoy a long 4.2 mile loop hike by combining the 1 mile Humpback Rocks trail with the Appalachian Trail north to return to the parking area on the Old Howardsville Turnpike (trail just right of the picnic table).

Glass Hollow Loop Hike

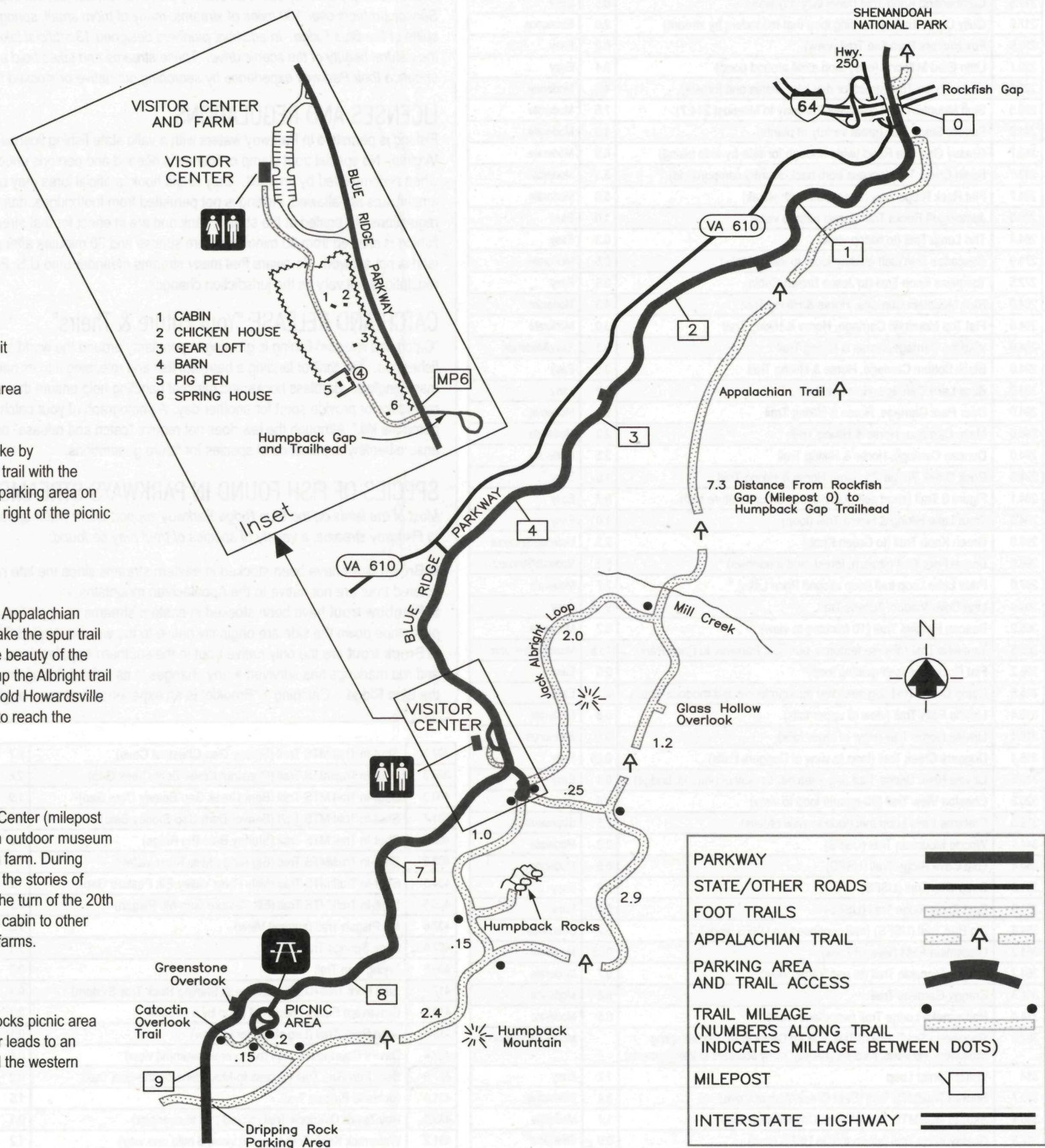
combine the Jack Albright Trail with the Appalachian Trail for a 3 mile loop hike. Be sure to take the spur trail to Glass Hollow Overlook and enjoy the beauty of the piedmont east of the Blue Ridge. Pick up the Albright trail left of the stone picnic table or take the old Howardsville Turnpike right of the stone picnic table to reach the Appalachian Trail/Glass Hollow.

Mountain Farm Trail

begins at the Humpback Rocks Visitor Center (milepost 5.8). This easy .25 mile hike through an outdoor museum that is reminiscent of a 1890s mountain farm. During the summer months, interpreters relate the stories of southern Appalachian mountain life at the turn of the 20th century. The gravel path leads past the cabin to other outbuildings associated with mountain farms.

Catoctin Trail

begins at the back of the Humpback Rocks picnic area (milepost 8.5). This .3 mile leg stretcher leads to an overlook of the Shenandoah Valley and the western horizon.

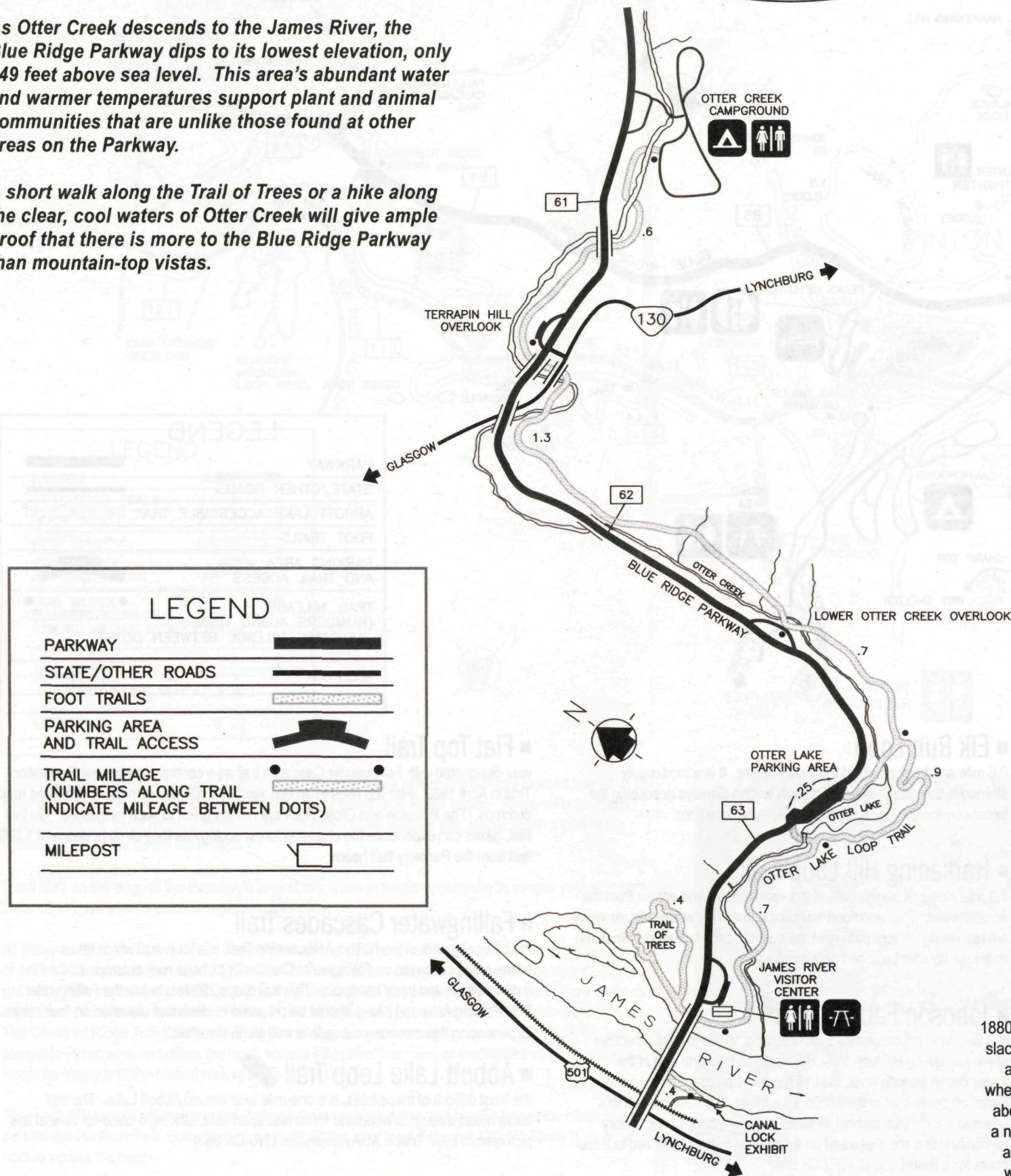




OTTER CREEK & JAMES RIVER MP 60 - 63

As Otter Creek descends to the James River, the Blue Ridge Parkway dips to its lowest elevation, only 649 feet above sea level. This area's abundant water and warmer temperatures support plant and animal communities that are unlike those found at other areas on the Parkway.

A short walk along the Trail of Trees or a hike along the clear, cool waters of Otter Creek will give ample proof that there is more to the Blue Ridge Parkway than mountain-top vistas.



■ Otter Creek Trail

(3.5 miles) parallels the Parkway road as it meanders from Otter Creek campground to the James River Visitor Center. Most sections of this trail are easy to hike and can be reached from many points along the motor road.

■ Otter Lake Loop Trail

(0.9 miles) provides scenic views of Otter Lake. This is also a good trail for watching wildlife. Look for beaver lodges and dams along tributary streams. Early morning and late evening are prime times for wildlife observation.

■ Trail of Trees

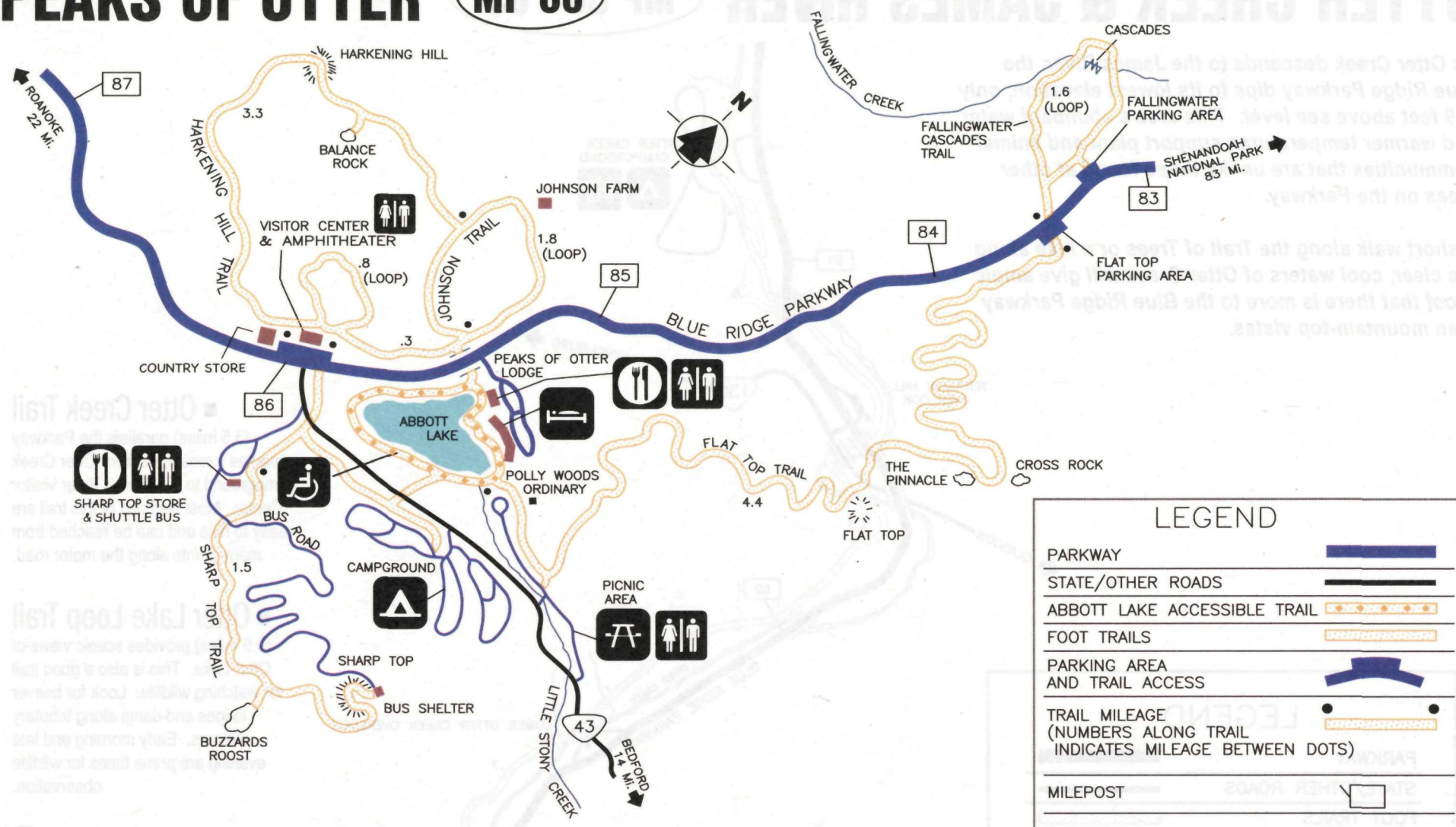
(0.4 miles) begins near the James River Visitor Center and wanders through a shaded stream drainage. Trail signs identify many of the trees and shrubs of the river valley. This trail also affords a handsome view of the James River water gap, a rare geological feature.

■ Canal Lock Trail

This easy 0.4 mile roundtrip walk includes remnants of the old canal system (1821 to 1880) along the James River including a lift lock, slackwater connection to the river, the tow path, and a restored section of the prism (the ditch where boats floated). Exhibits relate information about the canal operation and history. It is also a nice opportunity to enjoy the lowest elevation along the Parkway and look for some aquatic wildlife including river otters and bald eagles.

PEAKS OF OTTER

MP 86



■ Sharp Top Trail

1.5 miles to the summit, is the most popular trail at the Peaks and originates across the Parkway from the Visitor Center. This is a steep and strenuous route and should be attempted only by those in good health. There is no drinking water available on the summit, so carry plenty with you. The summit offers an impressive 360-degree view of the Peaks of Otter area, the Piedmont to the east, and the Shenandoah Valley with the Allegheny mountains to the west. Allow two hours for hiking up and one hour for hiking down. Add an extra half-hour for the spur trail to Buzzard's Roost, a series of large rock formations offering different views of the area. Concession-operated bus service (one-way or round trip) to within one quarter mile of the top is available seasonally. Hiking along the bus road is prohibited.

■ Elk Run Loop

0.8 mile and begins behind the visitor center. It is a moderately strenuous trail and is self-guiding with written displays describing the forest community. For a leisurely walk, allow one hour.

■ Harkening Hill Loop Trail

3.3 miles long. It begins behind the visitor center and across from the amphitheater. This woodland trail climbs to a ridge where distant views are rewarding. A spur path near the summit leads to Balance Rock, an immense boulder balanced on a small rock.

■ Johnson Farm Trail

is a loop trail, approximately two miles long, which follows a section of the Harkening Hill loop trail. Beginning at the north end of the visitor center parking area, the trail leads 1.1 miles to the Johnson Farm, originally built in the 1850s. Like many mountain homes, this one was improved a number of times over the years. Living history demonstrations are presented on a seasonal basis. Allow two to three hours for a leisurely visit. (TRACK trail)

■ Flat Top Trail

was designated with Fallingwater Cascades trail as a continuous National Recreation Trail in April 1982. Flat Top rises to an elevation of 4,004 feet with many scattered rock outcrops. The Pinnacle and Cross Rock are names given to such formations. On this trail, hikers can experience the changing forest ecology as they climb or descend 1,600 feet from the Parkway trail heads.

■ Fallingwater Cascades Trail

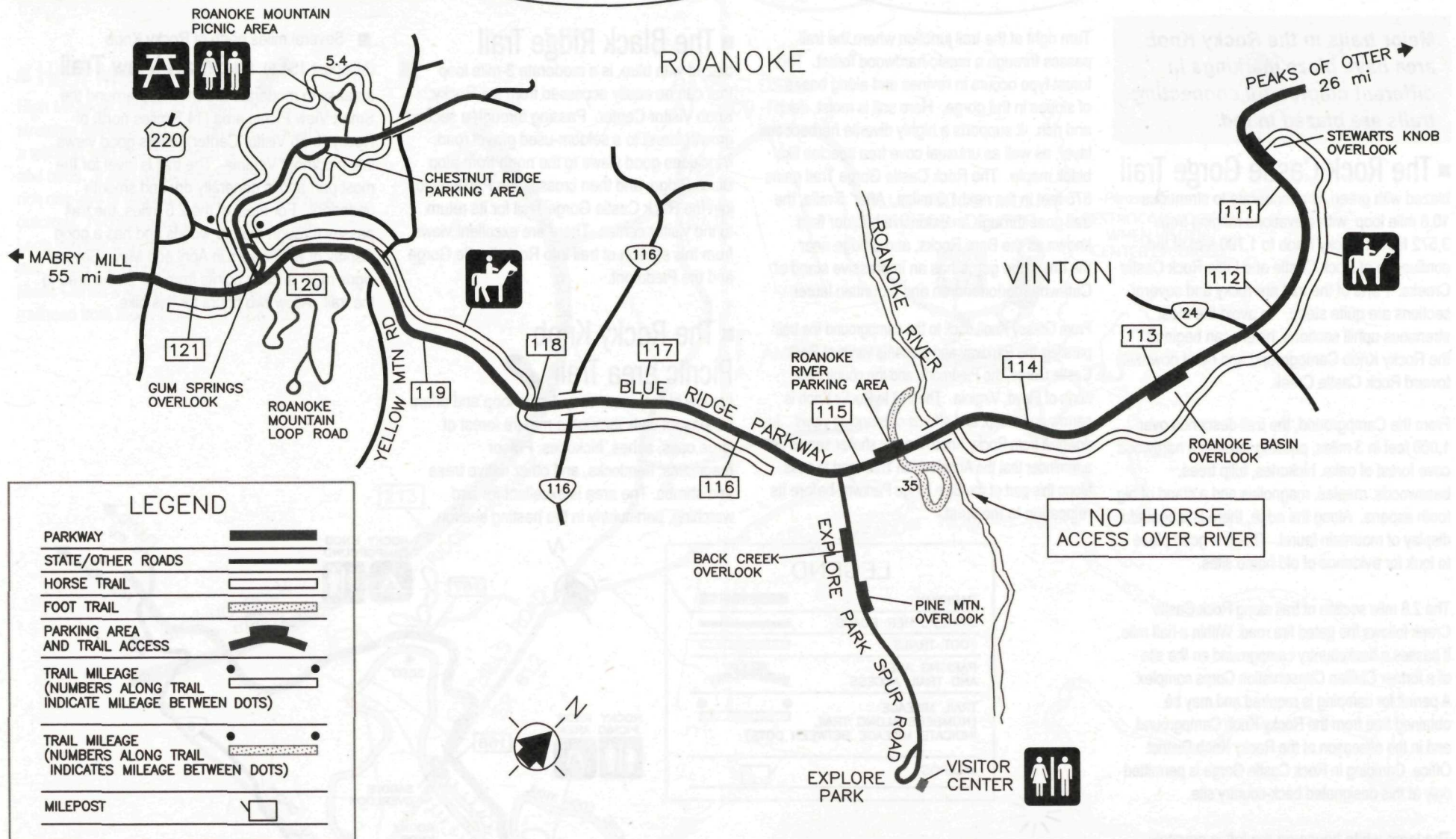
the other segment of the National Recreation Trail, is a loop trail which takes hikers along cascades on Fallingwater Creek with its huge rock outcrops clothed in rhododendron and large hemlocks. This trail drops 260 feet below the Fallingwater Trail Parking Area and hikers should be prepared to climb that elevation on their return. Experiencing this mountain cascade is well worth the effort.

■ Abbott Lake Loop Trail

the least difficult of these trails, is a one-mile loop around Abbott Lake. The trail takes hikers through a woodland forest and open field, offering a close-up view of this picturesque lake. Trail is ADA Accessible. (TRACK trail)



ROANOKE VALLEY MP 111 - 120

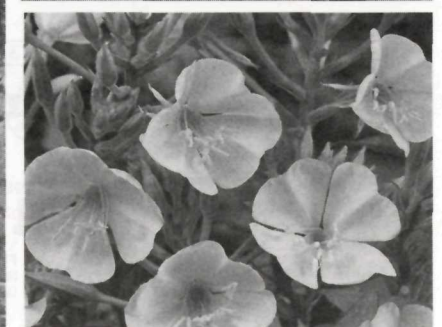
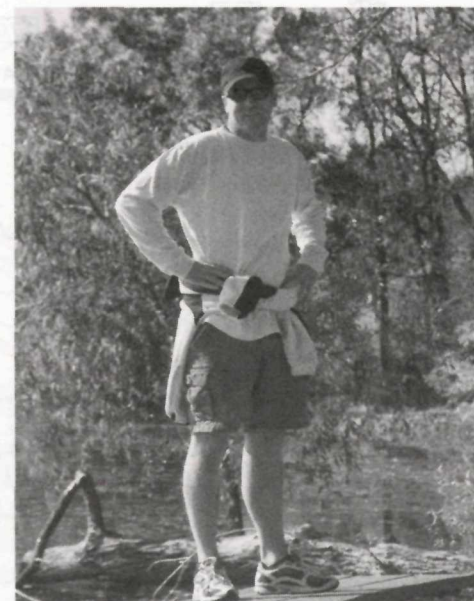


Roanoke is the largest population center on the Parkway, a late nineteenth century railroad town that still reflects much of the natural and cultural history of the entire Blue Ridge region. Regional crossroads, whether they are small mountain communities or larger cities such as this, are as much a part of the Parkway experience as the drive itself.

Even here on the edge of the Parkway's largest city, there is ample opportunity to stretch your legs on short trails, or to have a more extensive hiking experience.

At Stewarts Knob (Milepost 110.6), Roanoke Mountain (Milepost 120.3 at the top of the one way loop road), or at Buck Mountain (Milepost 123.2), trails of one mile or less offer the casual hiker the opportunity to get away from the road and traffic to experience the forested slopes of the Blue Ridge. In the winter when trees shed their leaves, some views of the Roanoke Valley or surrounding peaks are also worth the effort. The Chestnut Ridge Trail (Milepost 120.4) has various accesses along the spur road or from the Roanoke Mountain Picnic area and offers the more serious hiker over five miles of moderate trails with a few views of Roanoke Valley and the natural history it has to offer.

There are few opportunities along the Parkway for horseback riding, but here in Roanoke, horse trails parallel the Parkway from Gum Springs overlook on the spur road (Milepost 120.4). There is no access for horses across the river.



Blue Ridge Parkway

ROCKY KNOB

MP 166 - 174

Major trails in the Rocky Knob area have blaze markings in different colors. All connecting trails are blazed in red.

■ The Rock Castle Gorge Trail

blazed with green, is a moderate to strenuous 10.8 mile loop with elevations ranging from 3,572 feet at Rocky Knob to 1,700 feet at the confluence of Rock Castle and Little Rock Castle Creeks. Parts of the trail are rocky and several sections are quite steep. To avoid the most strenuous uphill sections, hikers can begin at the Rocky Knob Campground and head downhill toward Rock Castle Creek.

From the Campground, the trail descends over 1,000 feet in 3 miles, passing through a hardwood cove forest of oaks, hickories, tulip trees, basswoods, maples, magnolias and a stand of big tooth aspens. Along the ridge, there is a beautiful display of mountain laurel. This is a good place to look for evidence of old home sites.

The 2.8 mile section of trail along Rock Castle Creek follows the gated fire road. Within a half mile, it passes a backcountry campground on the site of a former Civilian Conservation Corps complex. A permit for camping is required and may be obtained free from the Rocky Knob Campground and in the off-season at the Rocky Knob District Office. Camping in Rock Castle Gorge is permitted only at this designated back-country site.

The large white house on the left is privately owned and is not open to the public. After steadily climbing beyond the house, there are excellent views of the creek, 100 feet below. This area has a fabulous display of wildflowers in April and early May. Rock Castle Cascades on the left is a prominent landmark.

Turn right at the trail junction where the trail passes through a mesic-hardwood forest. This forest type occurs in ravines and along bases of slopes in the gorge. Here soil is moist, deep and rich. It supports a highly diverse herbaceous layer, as well as unusual cove tree species like black maple. The Rock Castle Gorge Trail gains 875 feet in the next 1.5 miles. After .5 mile, the trail goes through an extensive boulder field known as the Bare Rocks, and a ridge near the rim of the gorge has an impressive stand of Catawba rhododendron and mountain laurel.

From Grassy Knoll back to the campground the trail parallels the Parkway and presents views of Rock Castle Gorge, the Piedmont, and the countryside north of Floyd, Virginia. The trail to Rocky Knob is narrow and steep, and affords outstanding views. Just downhill from Rocky Knob, a rustic shelter serves as a reminder that the Appalachian Trail used to pass along this part of the Blue Ridge Parkway before its relocation to the west.

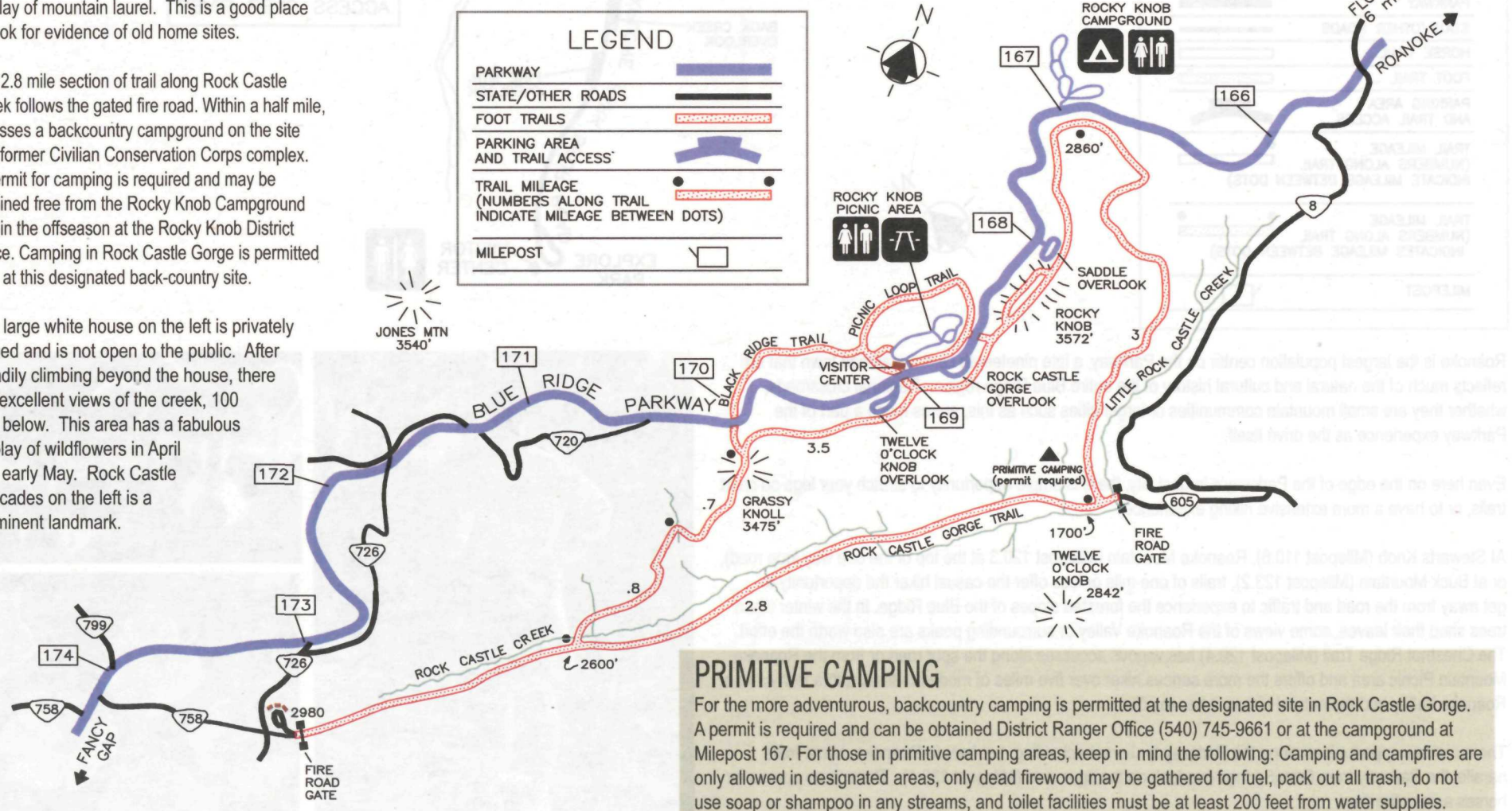
■ The Black Ridge Trail

blazed with blue, is a moderate 3-mile loop that can be easily accessed from the Rocky Knob Visitor Center. Passing through a second growth forest to a seldom-used gravel road, it includes good views to the north from atop Black Ridge, and then crosses the Parkway to join the Rock Castle Gorge Trail for its return to the visitor center. There are excellent views from this section of trail into Rock Castle Gorge and the Piedmont.

■ The Rocky Knob Picnic area Trail

(yellow blaze) is an easy 1-mile loop and offers a pleasant walk through a mature forest of large oaks, ashes, hickories, Fraser magnolias, hemlocks, and other native trees and shrubs. The area is excellent for bird watching, particularly in the nesting season.

Several miles north of Rocky Knob (Milepost 154.5), the **Smart View Trail**, an easy to moderate 2.6-mile loop around the Smart View Picnic area (14.5 miles north of Rocky Knob Visitor Center), offers good views into piedmont Virginia. The trail is level for the most part and is generally dry and smooth underfoot. For most of the 2.6 miles, the trail passes through mature woods and has a good display of wildflowers in April and May. Several signs mark access points from the picnic area to the trail. Allow two hours for this hike.

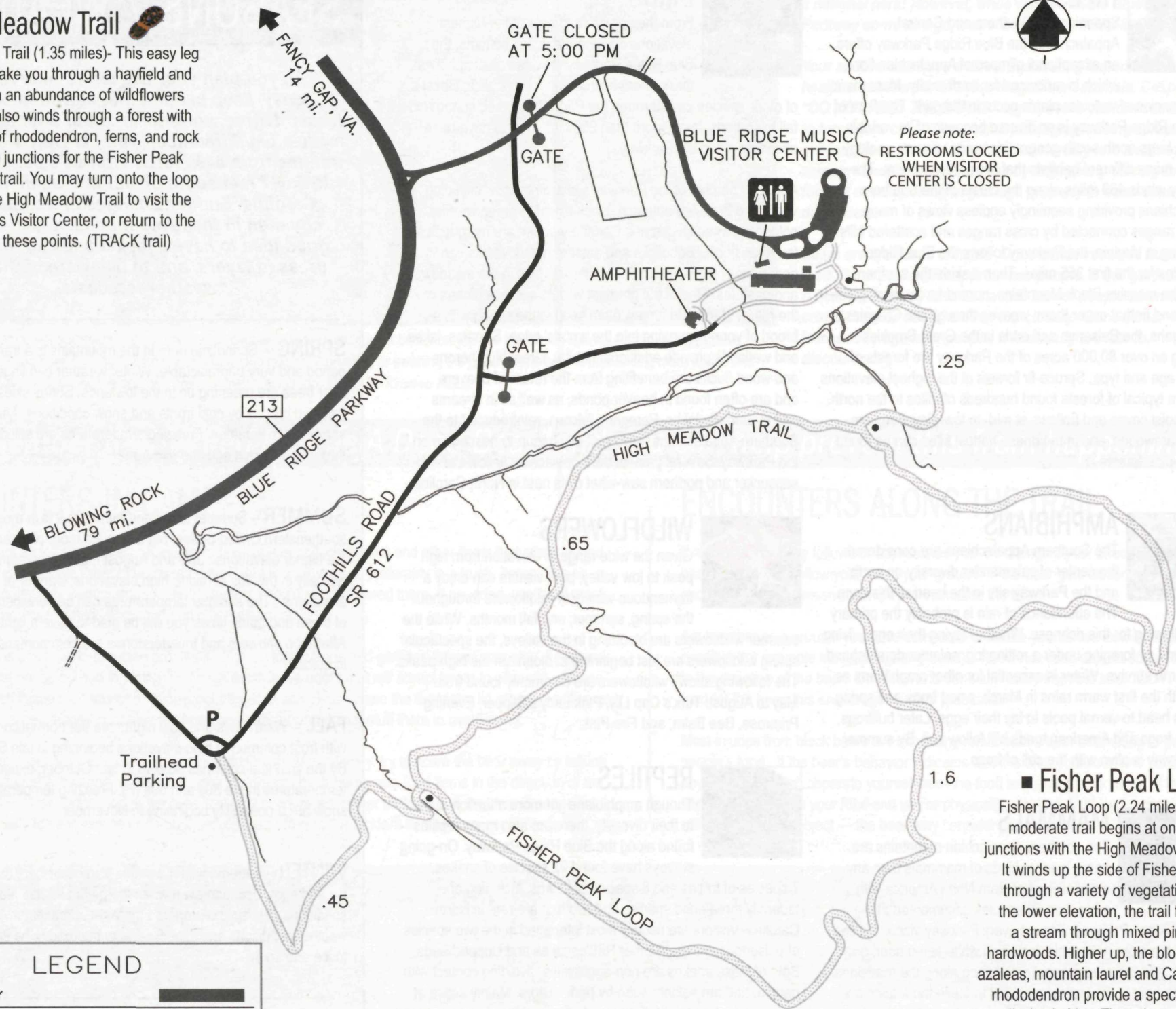




BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER MP 213

■ High Meadow Trail

High Meadow Trail (1.35 miles)- This easy leg stretcher will take you through a hayfield and a wetland with an abundance of wildflowers and birds. It also winds through a forest with rich displays of rhododendron, ferns, and rock outcrops. Two junctions for the Fisher Peak Loop join this trail. You may turn onto the loop trail, follow the High Meadow Trail to visit the Music Center's Visitor Center, or return to the trailhead from these points. (TRACK trail)



Please note:
RESTROOMS LOCKED
WHEN VISITOR
CENTER IS CLOSED



LEGEND

PARKWAY	
STATE/OTHER ROADS	
TRAIL MILEAGE (NUMBERS ALONG TRAIL INDICATE MILEAGE BETWEEN DOTS)	
MILEPOST	

■ Fisher Peak Loop

Fisher Peak Loop (2.24 miles) This moderate trail begins at one of its junctions with the High Meadow Trail. It winds up the side of Fisher Peak through a variety of vegetation. At the lower elevation, the trail follows a stream through mixed pine and hardwoods. Higher up, the blooms of azaleas, mountain laurel and Catawba rhododendron provide a spectacular display in May. They give way to a diverse second growth forest of oak, poplar, maple and sourwood trees. Look for abundant signs of animal life, such as woodpecker holes, deer tracks, and turkey dust baths.

PLANTS & WILDLIFE



TREES

Spanning the Southern and Central Appalachians, the Blue Ridge Parkway offers an exceptional glimpse of Appalachian flora, which is renowned for its diversity. More than 1,400 species of vascular plants occur in the park. The flora of the Blue Ridge Parkway is so diverse because of its variable climate, large north-south geographic range, diverse geology, and the many different habitats that are protected here. The Parkway winds 469 miles along the crests of the Southern Appalachians providing seemingly endless views of many parallel ranges connected by cross ranges and scattered hills. Beginning in Virginia, the Parkway follows the Blue Ridge Mountains for the first 355 miles. Then it skirts the southern end of the massive Black Mountains, named for the dark green spruce and fir that cover them, weaves through the Craggies, the Pisgahs, the Balsams, and ends in the Great Smokies. Growing on over 80,000 acres of the Parkway are forests of varying age and type. Spruce-fir forests at the highest elevations are more typical of forests found hundreds of miles to the north. In the moist coves and hollows at mid- to low-elevations are mixed hardwoods, and in the driest, hottest sites can be found the oak-pine forests.



AMPHIBIANS

The Southern Appalachians are considered the center of salamander diversity on earth and the Parkway sits in the heart of this zone.

The abundance of rain is probably the primary factor allowing for this richness. Whether laying their eggs, living in streams, or foraging under a rotting log, salamanders depend on water to survive. Water is essential for other amphibians as well. With the first warm rains in March, wood frogs and spring peepers head to vernal pools to lay their eggs. Later bullfrogs, pickerel frogs and American toads will follow suit. By summer the Parkway is alive with the call of frogs.



MAMMALS

The southern Appalachian mountains are home to more kinds of mammals than any other area of eastern North America with more than 50 species documented along

the Blue Ridge Parkway. Almost every Parkway visitor will see some of the more noticeable, including white-tailed deer, gray squirrels, and the ever-present groundhog along the roadsides. The black bear is the largest mammal in these mountains and, although rarely seen by park visitors, is increasing in numbers in both Virginia and North Carolina. The most opportunistic mammals - raccoons, opossums, and skunks - are common in campgrounds and picnic areas.



BIRDS

From the spruce-fir forests at the highest elevations down to the valley bottoms, the Blue Ridge Parkway provides nesting habitat for northern and southern birds alike. Dozens of other species pass through the Parkway on their spring and fall migrations. In all, more than 250 bird species have been observed along the Parkway.

About 20 percent of the Parkway's breeding birds, including veery, red-breasted nuthatch, black-throated green warbler, golden-crowned kinglet and Canada warbler, are more typically found up north. Bobolinks and eastern meadowlarks can occasionally be found singing on fence posts in the meadows and pastures. One of the greatest wildlife success stories is the return of the wild turkey, often seen in the spring with a brood of young scurrying into the woods' edge. Streams, lakes and wetlands provide additional habitat. Great blue herons and wood ducks are benefiting from the return of beavers and are often found in beaver ponds, as well as in streams and man-made lakes. Peregrine falcons, reintroduced to the Southern Appalachians, have recently begun to nest again on the Parkway. Several pairs of the Appalachian yellow-bellied sapsucker and northern saw-whet owls nest in North Carolina.



WILDFLOWERS

Given the wide range in elevation from high peak to low valley, park visitors can enjoy a tremendous variety of wildflowers throughout the spring, summer, and fall months. While the summer wildflowers are blooming in the valleys, the spectacular spring wildflowers are just beginning to bloom on the high peaks. The following showy wildflowers are commonly found from May to August: Turk's Cap Lily, Pink Lady's Slipper, Evening Primrose, Bee Balm, and Fire Pink.



REPTILES

Though amphibians get more attention due to their diversity, there are also many reptiles found along the Blue Ridge Parkway. On-going surveys have found 22 species of snakes, 7 species of turtles and 6 species of lizards, including one federally threatened species and two that are rare in North Carolina. Visitors are usually most interested in the two species of poisonous snakes, Timber Rattlesnakes and Copperheads. Both of these snakes are non-aggressive, avoiding contact with people, and are seldom seen by park visitors. Mainly active at night and in the twilight, these snakes spend the day in sheltered areas where they can avoid the daytime heat. Be careful where you place your hands, especially in rocky areas! Visits to Parkway ponds and wetlands may reveal one or more species of turtles. Snapping turtles inhabit many lakes and streams, feeding on fish and other aquatic animals.

PARKWAY BY THE SEASONS / WEATHER

As you plan your trip to the Blue Ridge Parkway, keep in mind that elevation and, to a lesser degree, your north-south orientation can make a big difference! The Parkway's elevation ranges from 649 feet at Virginia's James River to 6,047 feet south of Mount Pisgah in North Carolina. Sudden changes in weather are common in these mountains. It is always a good idea to have a jacket and cap on hand, dress in layers, and to be aware of the local weather forecasts.

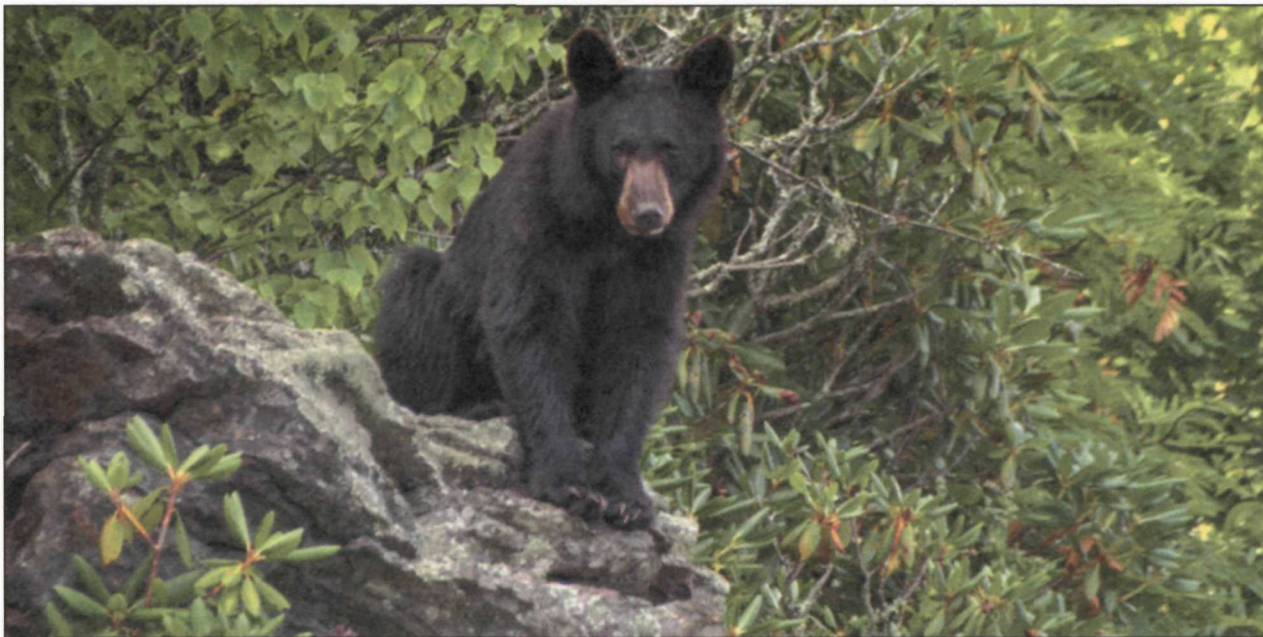
SPRING – Springtime here in the mountains is a transitional period and very unpredictable. Winter weather can linger long after trees are greening up in the lowlands. Sunny skies can be followed quickly by cold fronts and snow conditions. Afternoon rain showers are common. Freezing temperatures are still common throughout March and into mid April.

SUMMER – Summer is hot and humid as it is in most of the southeastern United States, but it is much more pleasant in the higher elevations. July and August high temperatures are typically in the 80s at mid to high elevations, warmer at the lower elevations. The summer temperatures can be considerably cooler at times and many times you will be glad to have a light jacket. Afternoon showers and thunderstorms are common and can move in quickly.

FALL – Warm days and cool nights are the normal conditions, with frost common at high elevations beginning in late September. By the time leaf color has peaked in late October, expect high temperatures in the 50s and 60s (F). Freezing temperatures and snow are a possibility beginning in November.

WINTER – Extreme winter weather can occur here, with wind, ice and snow occurring even when the piedmont has pleasant conditions. Always be prepared for fast-approaching winter weather conditions and expect parts of the road to be closed due to ice and snow.

Always check your favorite weather-related web sites for conditions prior to your visit any time of the year. The park website and information line (828) 298-0398, are good sources of information.



If you see a bear do not approach it. If your presence causes a bear to change its behavior, you are too close! This may promote aggressive behavior such as the bear running toward you, making loud noises or grunting or swatting the ground. The bear is demanding more space and you need to slowly back away- the bear will probably move away too. *Photo by Kristina Plaas.*

BEARS

Seeing a bear is exciting and the highlight to any visit to a national park! However, while visitors to the Blue Ridge Parkway come and go, bears and other wildlife live here.

Your actions can have a direct and lasting impact on the health and behavior of these magnificent animals. Despite "DO NOT FEED THE BEARS" signs, some visitors continue to lure bears closer for a quick photograph using scraps of food. Many more visitors unintentionally lure bears to campgrounds and picnic areas by improperly storing their food or not disposing of garbage properly in trash cans or dumpsters.

Bears are creatures of habit. Once a bear receives human food, it learns that if it approaches people, it will get fed. A bear will quickly lose its natural fear of people when we crowd them or observe them too closely. Once a bear learns to forage near people, it is usually too late to discourage it.

Remember that "A Fed Bear Is A Dead Bear" and you can help prevent this from happening.

ENCOUNTERS IN CAMP

Food should not be left unattended. Food (including coolers and ice chests) and other items that smell of food (cooking utensil, bags etc.) should be stored out of sight in your vehicle, preferably in a trunk. Items such as toothpaste, mouthwash, deodorant, and air fresheners should also be stored there. If provided, use bear-proof food storage lockers to safely store food and other attractants.

A clean camp is essential to reducing problems. Pick up food scraps and garbage around your site. Food and garbage should not be burned in your grill. These items leave odors that will attract bears to your site. Please deposit all trash inside a dumpster or bear-proof trash can and please close the dumpster lid after depositing your trash. Do not place garbage outside a trashcan or dumpster and do not stuff them to overflowing.

If a bear enters your campsite, pack up your food and trash. If necessary, try to scare the bear away by talking loudly or shouting at it, by banging pots and pans together or by throwing non-food items in the direction of the bear. Do not however, throw food at the bear, this only encourages further problems. If the bear is persistent, move away slowly to your vehicle or another secure area. Report the incident to a park ranger immediately.

ENCOUNTERS ALONG THE TRAIL

If a bear persistently follows or approaches you, try changing your direction. If the bear continues to follow you, stand your ground. If the bear gets closer, talk loudly or shout at it. Act aggressively and try to intimidate the bear.

Act together as a group if you have companions. Make yourselves look as large as possible (for example move to higher ground). Throw non-food objects such as rocks in the direction of the bear. Don't run and don't turn away from the bear. Don't leave food for the bear; this encourages further problems.

Most injuries from black bears are minor and result from a bear attempting to get at people's food. If the bear's behavior indicates that it is after your food and you're physically attacked, separate yourself from the food and slowly back away. If the bear shows no interest in your food and you're physically attacked, fight back aggressively with any available object — the bear may consider you as prey!



Elk – The New Big Guy in Town

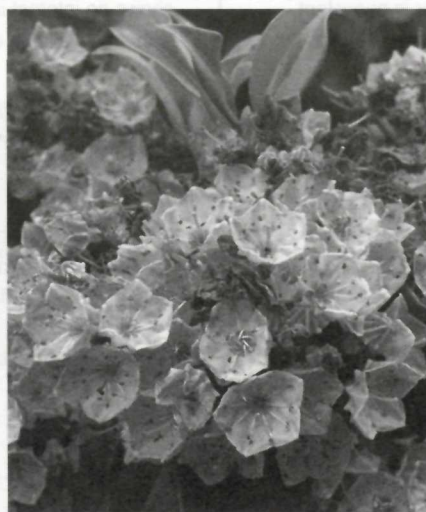
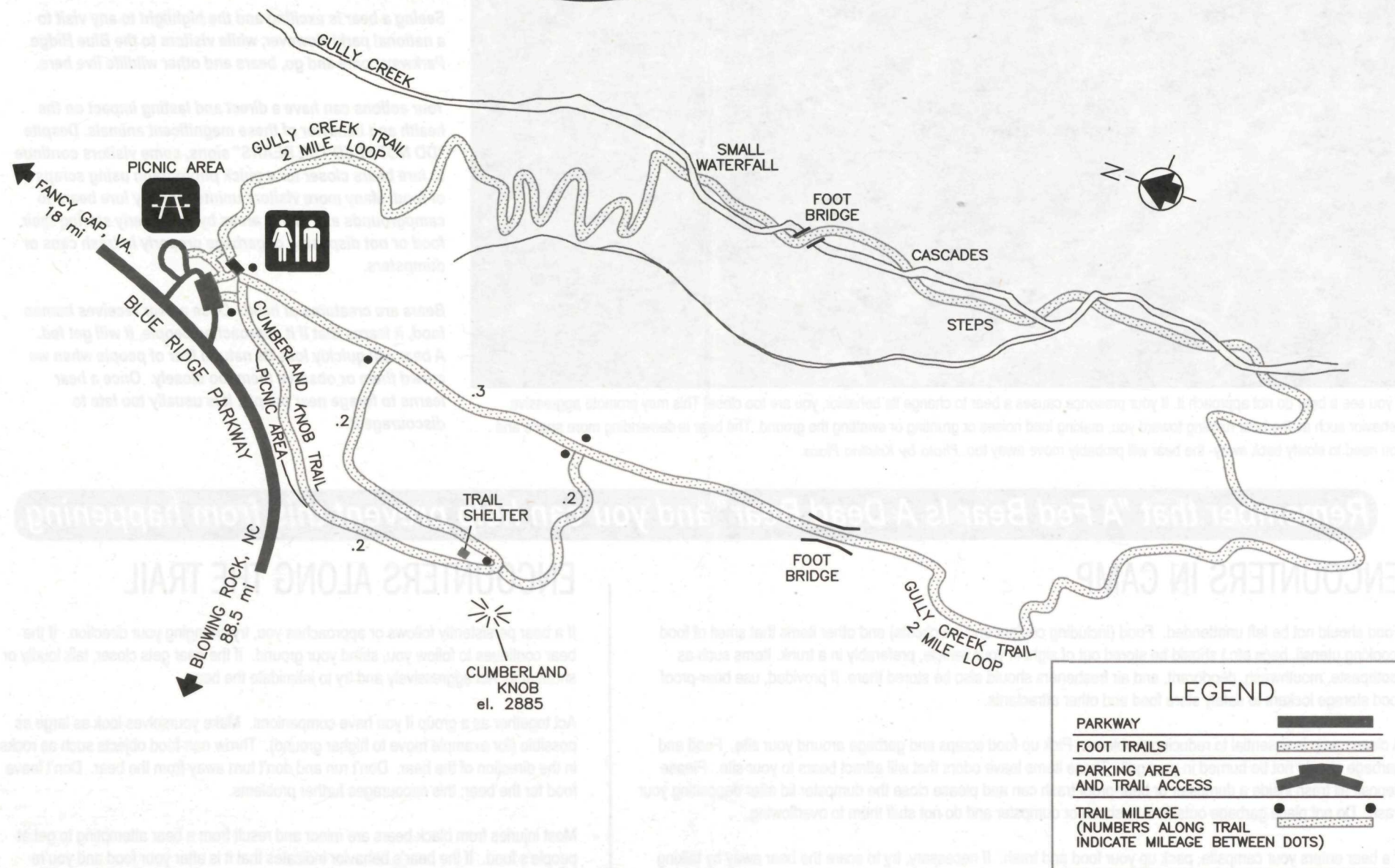
Elk once roamed the southern Appalachians, but were eliminated from this area in the late 1700s by over-hunting and habitat loss. Reintroduced to nearby Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 2002, elk can now be found on the southern end of the parkway.

Elk are large animals—much larger than black bears. Adult males, known as "bulls", can weigh 700 pounds. Females are called "cows" and average 500 pounds. Adults are 7-10 feet long from nose to tail, and up to 5 feet tall at the shoulder.

These imposing creatures are an increasingly common site on the parkway's southernmost stretches. **If you see an elk while traveling the Parkway stay in your vehicle and do not approach them. These wild animals deserve their space and your respect for their safety and yours. Elk can become aggressive, particularly in the fall which is their mating season.**

◀ Elk crossing at southern entrance to Parkway in Cherokee. Photo courtesy RomanticAsheville.com

CUMBERLAND KNOB MP 217



■ Cumberland Knob Trail

Cumberland Knob Trail is just right for those visitors who want to stretch their legs after a long drive on the Parkway. For an easy one-half mile walk, take the paved trail that starts near the gray structure that served as the Parkway's first concession stand. The trail loops through the picnic area to the Cumberland Knob Overlook shelter. (This shelter provides refuge from summer showers, but is not for overnight camping.) The elevation change is only 100 feet, making this a good trail for taking younger children.

■ Gully Creek Trail

Gully Creek Trail is strenuous but rewards hikers with views of a delightful mountain stream and the many plants that live along its cool, damp banks. The vegetation here contrasts sharply with that of the dryer mountain slopes. Hikers can begin at the old concession stand, although it may be easier to start from the Cumberland Knob Trail loop. Allow two hours.

DOUGHTON PARK MP 239 - 248

More than 30 miles of hiking trails meander through Doughton Park's pastures and along its streams. Hikers may encounter 25 stream crossings through ankle to knee-deep water. Visitors can stretch their legs on modest strolls or embark on more ambitious, day-long outings. Some trails may be strenuous.

■ Bluff Mountain Trail

Bluff Mountain Trail offers many scenic vistas and traverses relatively level terrain. The trail runs near the Parkway and is accessible from many locations along its 7.5 mile route from Brinegar Cabin Basin Cove Overlook.

■ Cedar Ridge Trail

Cedar Ridge Trail skirts the northern side of Doughton Park's boundary. Beginning near Brinegar Cabin, the trail descends a forested ridgeline 4.4 miles to the Grassy Gap Fire Road. The elevation changes more than 2,000 feet, making this a beautiful but strenuous trip.

■ Grassy Gap Fire Road

Grassy Gap Fire Road is a 6.5 mile trail, wide enough for hikers or horseback riders to travel side by side. The trail starts at Milepost 243.9 and ambles down the mountainside past the primitive campground to State Route 1730 (Longbottom Road). Horseback riders must enter and exit from Longbottom Road. Bicycles and motorized vehicles are prohibited.

■ Basin Creek Trail

Basin Creek Trail, accessible only from the Grassy Gap Fire Road, winds past cascading waterfalls for 3.3 miles to the century-old Caudill Cabin, former home of the Martin Caudill family. Part of the once-thriving Basin Cove community, this cabin was one of the few structures that withstood the devastating 1916 flood. Allow plenty of time for the 3.3 mile return trip and for the additional hike along Grassy Gap Fire Road.

■ Bluff Ridge Primitive Trail

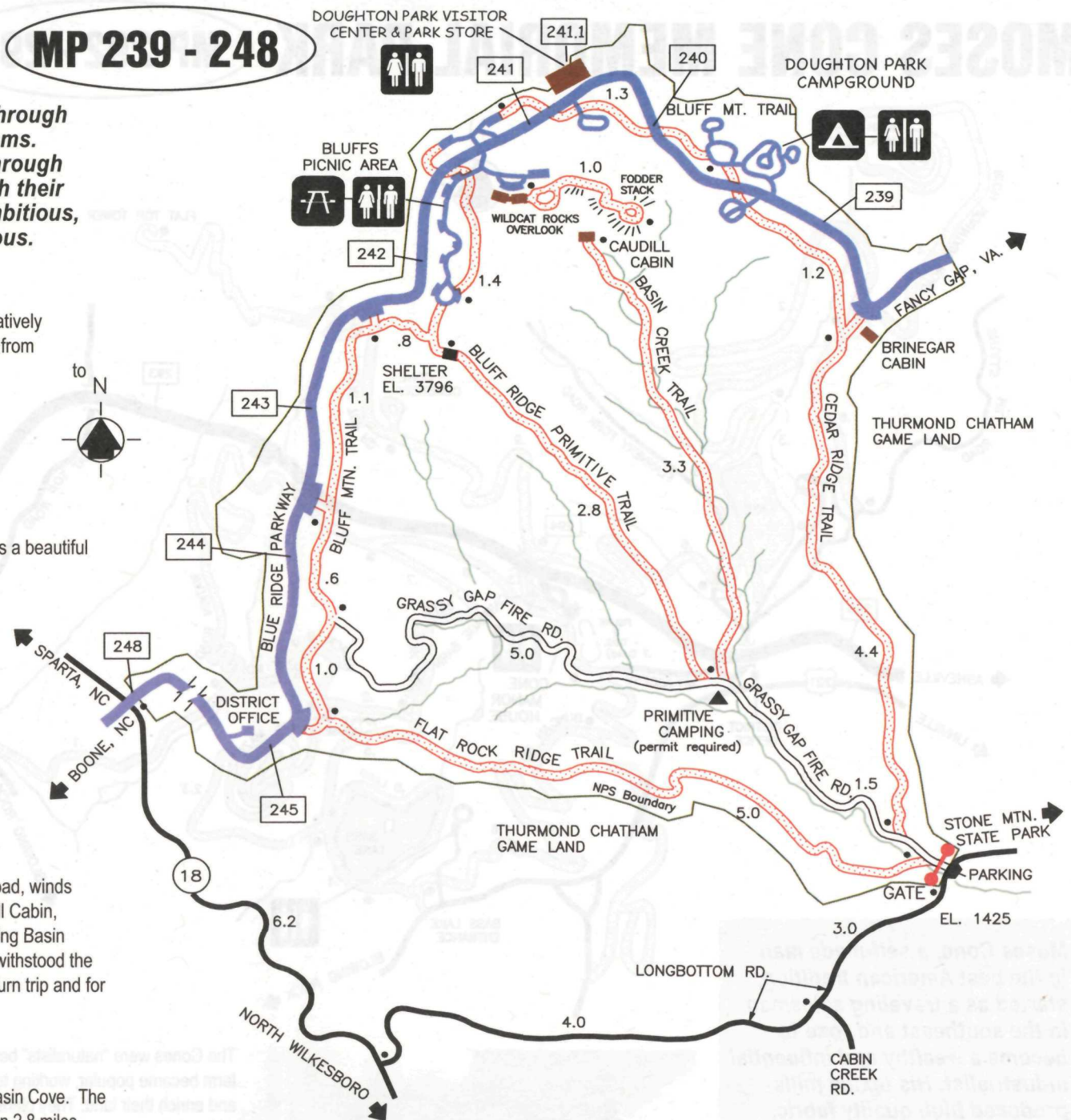
Bluff Ridge Primitive Trail is the shortest but steepest route into Basin Cove. The strenuous climb up the trail makes the hike seem much longer than 2.8 miles.

■ Flat Rock Ridge Trail

Flat Rock Ridge Trail begins on the mountain-top meadow at Basin Cove Overlook and ends on the damp, cool banks of Basin Cove Creek alongside the Grassy Gap Fire Road. The trail offers glimpses of rugged mountain slopes that attracted and challenged early settlers.

■ Fodder Stack Trail

Fodder Stack Trail, 2 miles round trip, shows off its delicate display of wildflowers in spring and rewards hikers year-round with the varied hues and fragrances of mixed pine and hardwood forest. Most of the trail is easy to moderate, with a short steep section at the start. Recommended for families, the trail represents a cross-section of Parkway environments.



PRIMITIVE CAMPING

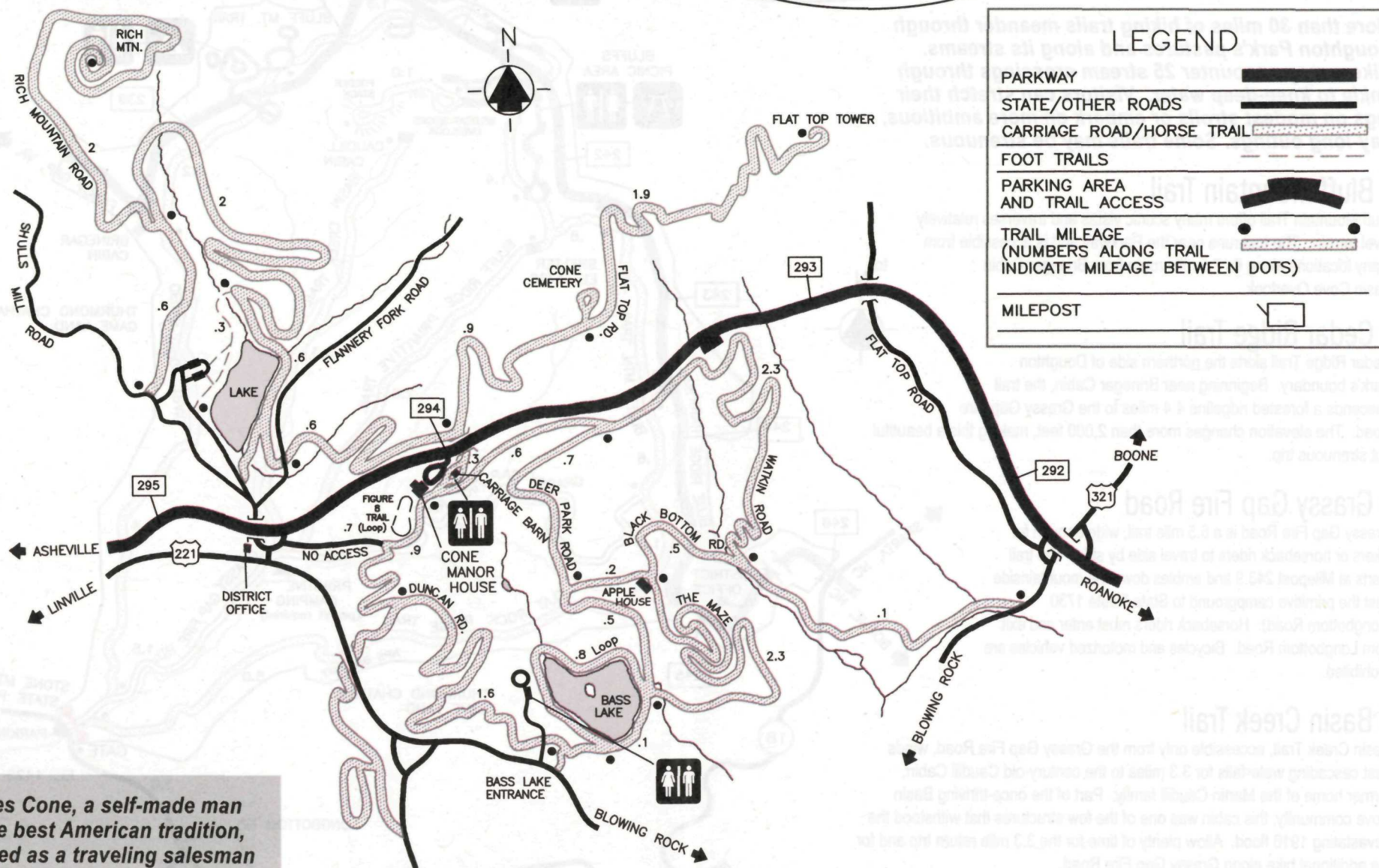
For the more adventurous, backcountry camping is permitted at the designated area in Basin Cove. A permit is required and can be obtained in person or by mail from the District Ranger Office, 49800 Blue Ridge Parkway, Laurel Springs, NC 28644 or at (336) 372-8568. The number of sites and group size are limited. Horseback camping is not permitted.

For those in primitive camping areas, keep in mind the following: Camping and campfires are only allowed in designated areas, only dead and down firewood may be gathered for fuel, pack out all trash, do not use soap or shampoo in any streams, and toilet facilities must be at least 200 feet from water supplies.

LEGEND

PARKWAY	
STATE/OTHER ROADS	
HORSE TRAIL	
FOOT TRAILS	
PARKING AREA AND TRAIL ACCESS	
TRAIL MILEAGE (NUMBERS ALONG TRAIL INDICATE MILEAGE BETWEEN DOTS)	
MILEPOST	

MOSES CONE MEMORIAL PARK MP 292 - 295



Moses Cone, a self-made man in the best American tradition, started as a traveling salesman in the southeast and rose to become a wealthy and influential industrialist. His textile mills produced high quality fabric, especially denim. Fond of nature, Moses was drawn to the mountainous region of western North Carolina with its moderate climate, fresh spring water, and clean air. In the mid-1890s, Moses and his wife Bertha, journeyed to Blowing Rock to design and build their summer estate as a retreat from their residence in Baltimore, Maryland and the mills in Greensboro, North Carolina.



Flat Top Manor, the Cones' magnificent 23-room summer retreat now houses a NPS visitor center and park store as well as the Southern Highland Craft Guild store. It is open spring through fall with tours scheduled seasonally.

The Cones were "naturalists" before the term became popular, working to preserve and enrich their land. They planted acres of white pines and hemlocks and brought sugar maples directly from New England for use on the estate. The 32,000 apple trees that Moses and Bertha established and cultivated here produced prize-winning apples.

Perhaps the aspect of the estate most appreciated by visitors today is the 25 miles of historic carriage roads. They remain an enduring example of the Cones' appreciation of the natural beauty around them. Formal rhododendron plantings are a feature of nearly all the trails. The Catawba or purple rhododendron and rosebay rhododendron are abundant, blooming in June and July

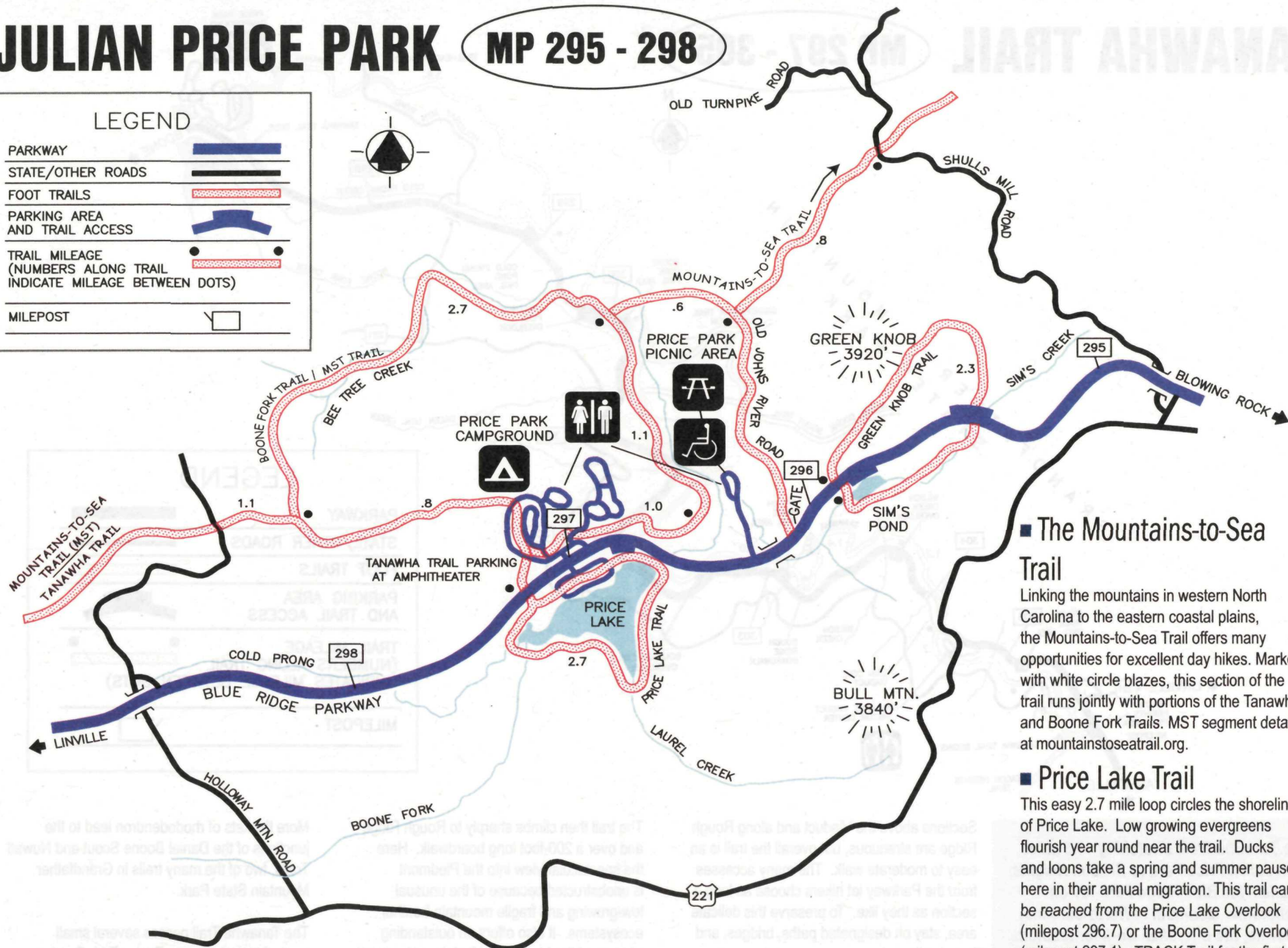
respectively. Mountain laurel, also planted extensively, is admired for its large clusters of pinkish flowers appearing in late spring.

The gently sloping carriage roads provide many opportunities for leisurely hiking.

Visit the Cone Cemetery on your way to Flat Top Tower, which offers a grand panorama of distant mountains. Wander through old apple orchards, meadows and forests or enjoy strolling around Bass and Trout Lakes. Most of the trails are multi-purpose; along the way you may meet horseback riders, joggers, or cross-country skiers in winter. Please be considerate of other visitors. Help preserve these historic trails by staying on the designated paths.

JULIAN PRICE PARK MP 295 - 298

LEGEND	
PARKWAY	
STATE/OTHER ROADS	
FOOT TRAILS	
PARKING AREA AND TRAIL ACCESS	
TRAIL MILEAGE (NUMBERS ALONG TRAIL INDICATE MILEAGE BETWEEN DOTS)	
MILEPOST	



■ The Mountains-to-Sea Trail

Linking the mountains in western North Carolina to the eastern coastal plains, the Mountains-to-Sea Trail offers many opportunities for excellent day hikes. Marked with white circle blazes, this section of the trail runs jointly with portions of the Tanawha and Boone Fork Trails. MST segment details at mountainstosea.org.

■ Price Lake Trail

This easy 2.7 mile loop circles the shoreline of Price Lake. Low growing evergreens flourish year round near the trail. Ducks and loons take a spring and summer pause here in their annual migration. This trail can be reached from the Price Lake Overlook (milepost 296.7) or the Boone Fork Overlook (milepost 297.1). TRACK Trail for the first mile of this trail and the paddling TRACK Trail is 2 miles round-trip if you follow the perimeter of Price Lake.

■ Tanawha Trail

Explore field and forest in Price Park while meandering along this trail that parallels the Parkway on the flanks of Grandfather Mountain and ends at Beacon Heights (milepost 305.5). This 13.5 mile trail branches off from the Boone Fork Trail near Price Park Campground. Parking and access for this trail is available at the Boone Fork Overlook. (milepost 297.1).

Founder of one of the nation's largest insurance companies, Julian Price purchased this land to provide a recreational area for his employees. When he died in 1946, his heirs left the land to the Blue Ridge Parkway as a memorial to a man who enjoyed sharing the area's natural beauty with others. Julian Price Memorial Park comprises 4,200 acres of rolling mountain land with elevations ranging from 3,400 feet to nearly 4,000 feet. Visitors who take to the trails will find scenery and solitude in abundance.

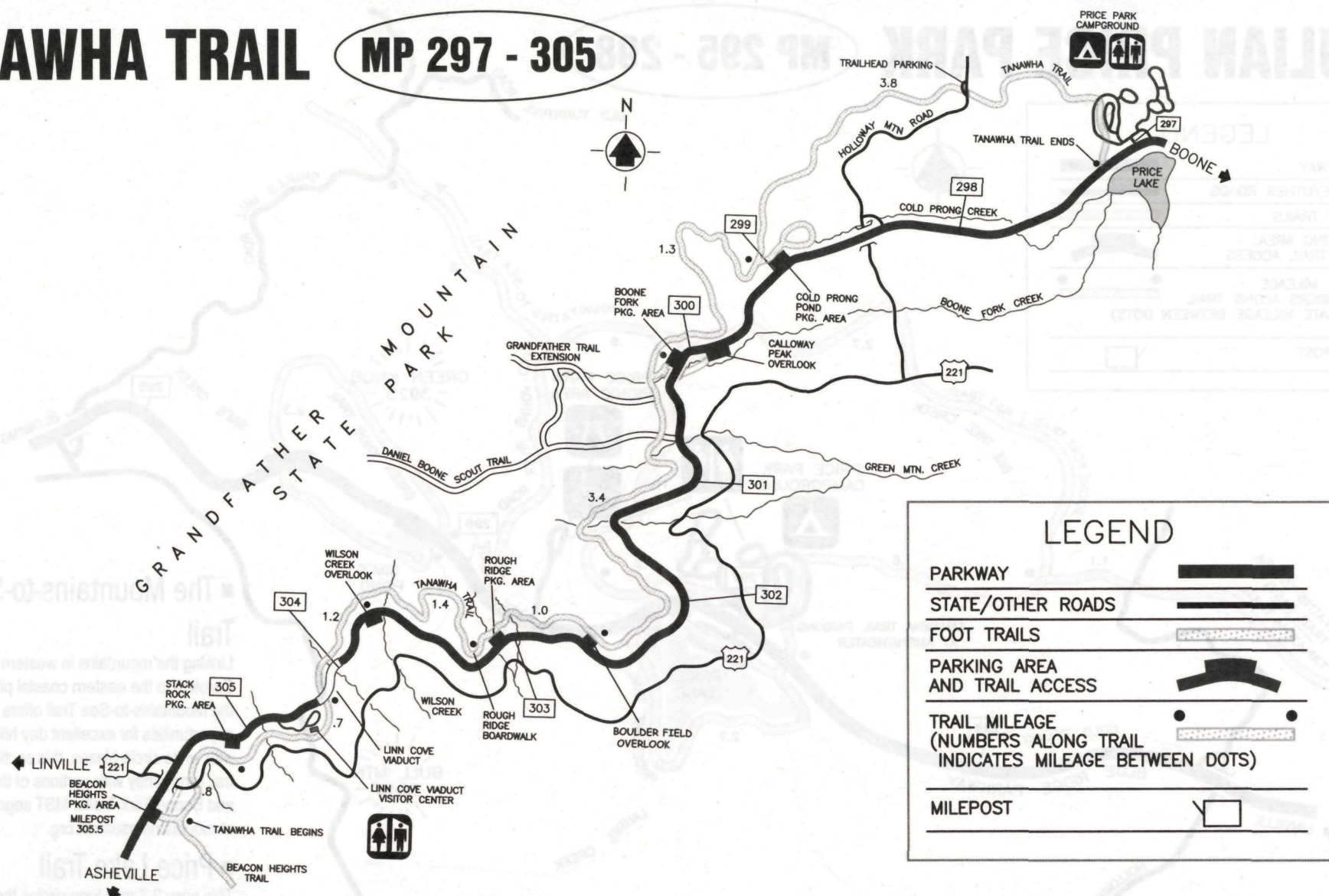
■ Green Knob Trail

Diverse in scenery, this trail follows Sim's Creek through a section of dense rhododendron shaded by old growth trees. Several hemlocks found along this trail measure more than 41 inches in diameter. A steady climb through pasture and woodlands leads to the top of Green Knob, offering a distant view of Price Lake. The last section of the trail descends a steep hill with a view of Calloway Peak on the horizon. This moderately strenuous 2.3 mile loop starts at Sim's Pond Parking Area (milepost 295.9).

■ Boone Fork Trail

Enjoy solitude while hiking along clear streams, past large rock out-crops, through meadows and shady rhododendron filled woods. Colorful wood ducks can occasionally be seen swimming in Boone Fork Creek. Allow at least 3 hours of daylight walking time on this moderate to strenuous 5.5 mile loop trail. Access the trail at the wooden footbridge in Price Park Picnic Area (milepost 296.4). TRACK Trail for first mile of this trail.

TANAWHA TRAIL MP 297 - 305



The Tanawha Trail, stretching 13.5 miles from Julian Price Park to Beacon Heights, parallels the Blue Ridge Parkway on Grandfather Mountain in North Carolina. Tanawha, the Cherokee word for fabulous hawk or eagle, is an appropriate name for this trail that offers hikers spectacular views of distant mountains. Completed in 1993, the Tanawha Trail, like the final section of the Parkway it mirrors, is unique in construction. The trail traverses a fragile and ancient ecosystem and leads hikers through a surprising range of biological and geological terrains. Some sections tunnel through thickets of laurel and rhododendron. Others dip down into remote hardwood coves and then ascend into evergreen glens. Boulder fields and cascading streams punctuate the landscape.

Sections above the Viaduct and along Rough Ridge are strenuous, but overall the trail is an easy to moderate walk. The many accesses from the Parkway let hikers choose as long a section as they like. To preserve this delicate area, stay on designated paths, bridges, and boardwalks.

Highlights

From the access point below the Linn Cove Viaduct, the Tanawha Trail passes underneath the Viaduct and ascends steeply up stone steps past an enormous boulder wall. The trail levels off and enters a shady glen thick with birch and beech trees. Beyond the cascading water of Wilson Creek, the trail crosses a clearing filled with huge rock formations. The trail here, accented with flat rocks, is like a flagstone path.

The trail then climbs sharply to Rough Ridge and over a 200-foot long boardwalk. Here the spectacular view into the Piedmont is unobstructed because of the unusual low-growing and fragile mountain-heather ecosystems. It also offers an outstanding glimpse of the Linn Cove Viaduct and several mountains—Grandmother Mountain, Hawksbill, and Table Mountain.

The trail continues on through a stately spruce and hemlock forest into a wooded glen reminiscent of New England. Its rocky landscape is filled with poplars, yellow birch, and oak.

Past Raven Rock, the trail tunnels through mountain laurel and rhododendron. This sheltered section then gives way to a more open area with a rock garden—large ferns cascade out of immense boulders.

More thickets of rhododendron lead to the junctions of the Daniel Boone Scout and Nuwati Trails, two of the many trails in Grandfather Mountain State Park.

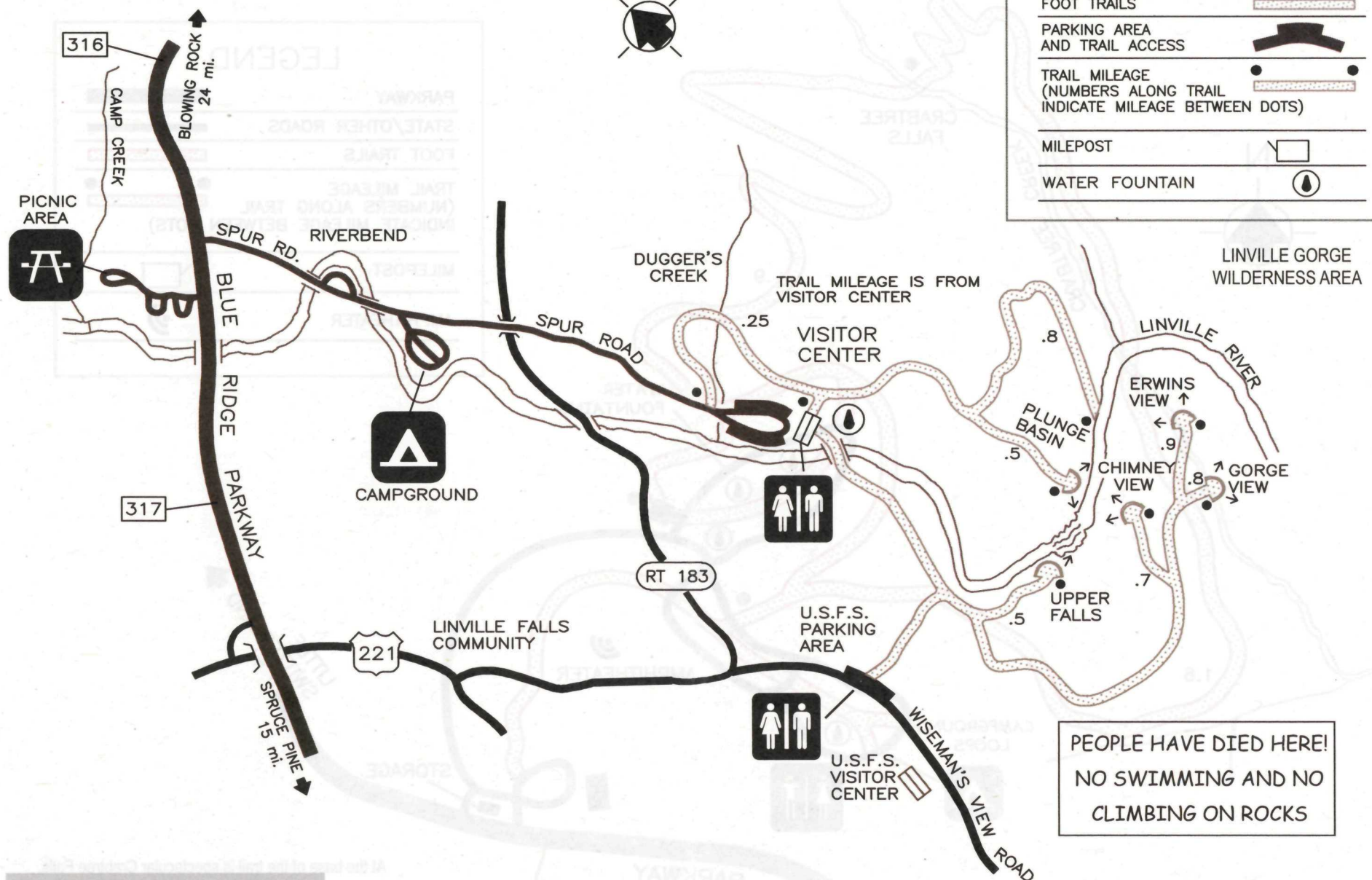
The Tanawha Trail passes several small cascades and crosses Boone Fork Creek. The trail winds in and out of rhododendron and laurel thickets, joins with an old logging road, and passes through a hardwood forest.

In the last section, leading to Price Park Picnic area, the trail breaks out of the woods into open fields. Here, it parallels and crosses Holloway Mountain Road, passes apple orchards, an old grave site, and pasture land, which in spring is blanketed with numerous wildflowers. Finally the trail joins Boone Fork Road for a short walk into the campground.



LINVILLE FALLS MP 316 - 317

LEGEND	
PARKWAY	
STATE/OTHER ROADS	
FOOT TRAILS	
PARKING AREA AND TRAIL ACCESS	
TRAIL MILEAGE (NUMBERS ALONG TRAIL INDICATE MILEAGE BETWEEN DOTS)	
MILEPOST	
WATER FOUNTAIN	



Two main hiking trails lead to views of Linville falls. Both begin at the Linville Falls Visitor Center and pass through remnants of a virgin hemlock forest mixed with other familiar tree species such as white pine, oaks, hickory, and birch. A colorful and varied display of wildflowers decorates the trails in spring. Red and golden leaves in fall beautifully contrast with the soothing green of hemlocks. The Linville Falls trails range in difficulty from moderate to strenuous.

■ Erwins View Trail

A moderate 1.6 mile round-trip walk, offering hikers four overlooks, each revealing a different aspect of the Linville Falls area.

The first overlook is 0.5 miles from the visitor center, and is a moderate walk with a slight loss of elevation. Here, the Linville River spills gently over the upper falls where it widens and pauses. Drifting into a narrow canyon, the water suddenly spirals out of sight and plunges 45 feet over the lower falls.

The next overlook, Chimney View, 0.7 miles from the visitor center, is the first point on the trail

where the lower falls can be seen. It offers an excellent chance to photograph both the upper and lower falls. The overlook is named for the chimney-like rock outcroppings located to the right of the waterfall. The trail is strenuous in this area with considerable elevation gain.

At Gorge View Overlook, hikers can see the Linville River cutting its way through the Linville Gorge Wilderness Area.

The Erwins View Trail ends at Erwins View Overlook, 0.8 mile from the visitor center. From this vantage point hikers can enjoy a panoramic view of the Linville Gorge and a distant view of the

upper and lower falls. The trails to Linville Gorge (1.4 miles round trip) and to Plunge Basin (1 mile round trip) also start at the visitor center. The trail to Linville Gorge forks 0.2 mile from the visitor center. The right fork takes hikers to Plunge Basin Overlook where they can view the lower falls and the Chimneys. The left fork winds down through rock cliffs to the bottom of the falls where the force of the water cascading over the falls creates a large pool. Both of these trails are strenuous.

Swimming in the Linville River and climbing on the rocks is dangerous and not allowed.

Blue Ridge Parkway

CRABTREE FALLS

MP 339



LEGEND

PARKWAY	
STATE/OTHER ROADS	
FOOT TRAILS	
TRAIL MILEAGE (NUMBERS ALONG TRAIL INDICATE MILEAGE BETWEEN DOTS)	
MILEPOST	
AMPHITHEATER	

At the base of the trail is spectacular Crabtree Falls, where water cascades over a 60-foot rock cliff. Many types of ferns and wildflowers thrive in the hollow, benefiting from the Fall's cool spray. The wet rocks here are slippery. **Please do not climb on the rocks.**

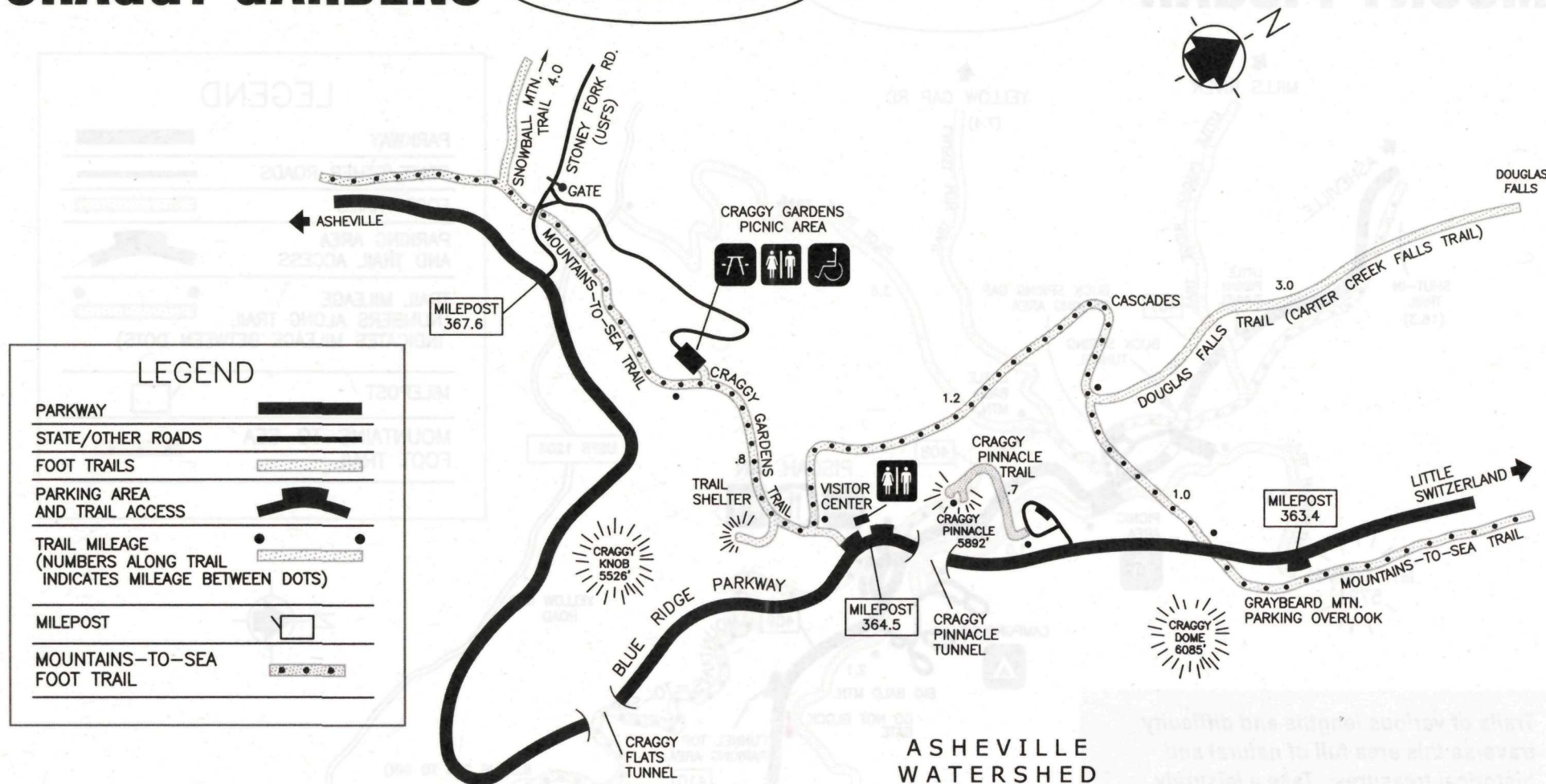
After viewing the falls, hikers can return either by retracing their steps or by continuing on a longer but more gradual ascent back to the parking lot. The longer route begins as a moderately steep switchback that provides another beautiful view of the falls. Once reaching the top of the ridge, the path levels out and meanders across Crabtree Creek and its tributaries. When the trail reaches the perimeter of the campground, signs direct hikers into the campground or back to the trailhead parking area near the entrance station.

The scenic 2.5-mile loop trail to Crabtree Falls is moderate to strenuous with a steep incline and rocky terrain. Hikers should allow 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 hours for the entire hike.

From the trailhead in the parking lot A behind the campground entrance, the trail descends .9 mile to the falls through a mixed oak-hickory forest. Hikers also will pass through a thicket of rosebay rhododendron.



CRAGGY GARDENS MP 363 - 367



■ The Craggy Gardens Trail

The Craggy Gardens Trail can be accessed from the south end of the visitor center parking area or from the north end of the picnic area. From the parking area, the trail begins with a moderate uphill climb for .3 mile to a large trail shelter. A short spur trail to the left crosses the rhododendron bald to views of the lofty Black Mountain Range.

The main trail descends gradually from the shelter to enter a mixed-hardwood forest and in another .5 mile reaches the picnic area. Half-way from the shelter to the Picnic area a narrow path to the right leads to a small gazebo nestled in the forest and overlooking the valley below. Many wildflowers embellish the Craggy Gardens Trail from spring through fall, and blueberries on the bald offer an excellent late-summer treat.

■ Douglas Falls Trail

Access to the Douglas Falls Trail (also known as the Carter Creek Falls Trail) is via the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MTS). From Graybeard Mt Overlook, travel the MTS south for one mile to the intersection with the Falls Trail. Follow the falls trail three miles through a mixed hardwood forest to its termination at the falls. The trail winds past two virgin hemlock groves before reaching the 70-foot Douglas Creek Falls. This strenuous, but rewarding 4-mile hike (8-mile round trip) has long been a favorite.

■ The Mountains-to-Sea Trail

skirts the southern side of Craggy Pinnacle and, when complete, will reach from the Smokies to the North Carolina coast. Accesses to the MTS are located at the south end of the visitor center parking area, at the north end of Craggy Gardens picnic area and at Graybeard Mt. Overlook, a mile north of the visitor center.

■ Craggy Pinnacle Trail

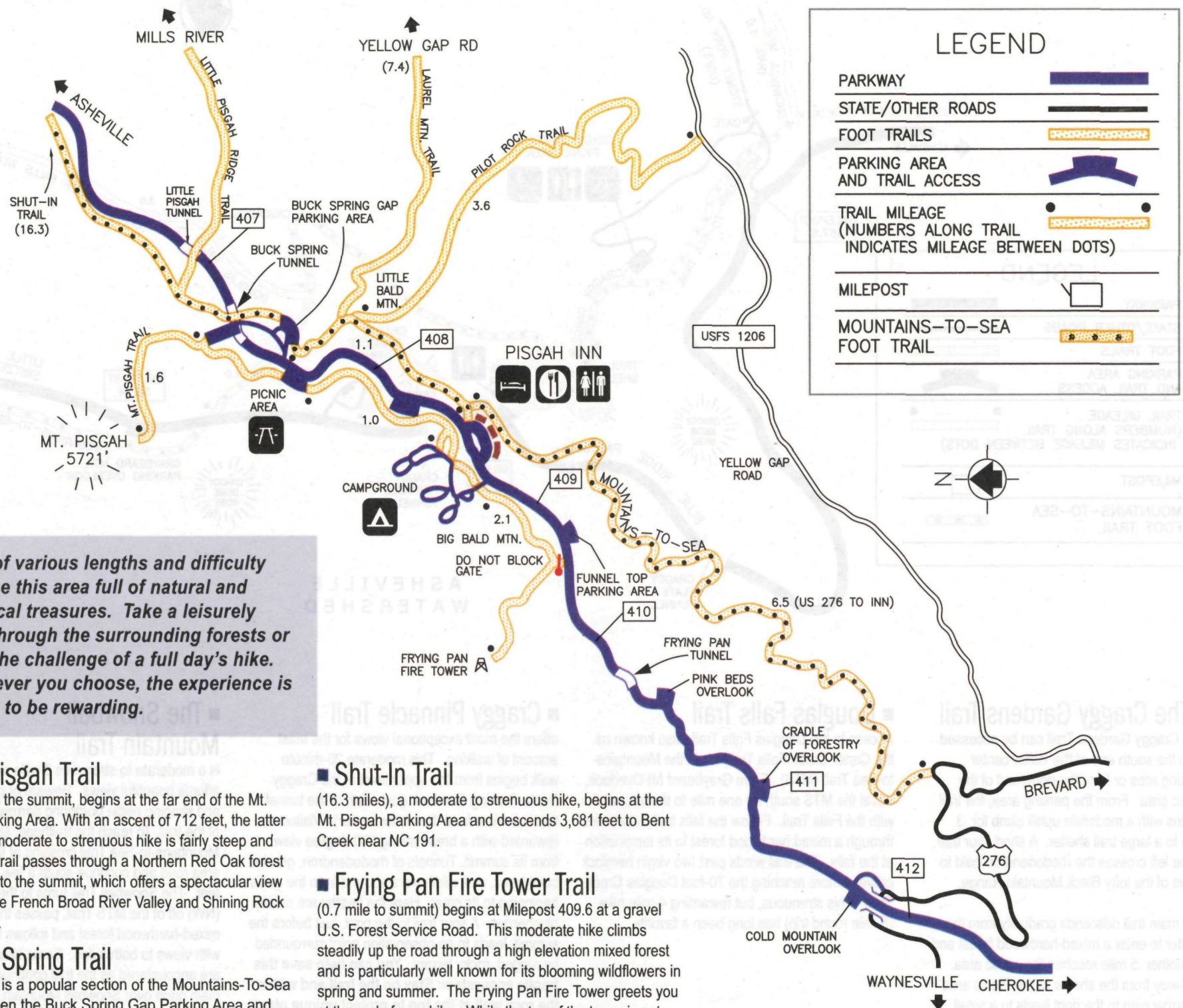
offers the most exceptional views for the least amount of walking. This moderate 20-minute walk begins from the upper level of the Craggy Dome Parking Overlook (just north of the tunnel that is in view from the visitor center). Visitors are rewarded with a breathtaking 360-degree view from its summit. Tunnels of rhododendron, gnarled birch trees, and wildflowers abound from the trail's beginning to its crest. Here the heaths are mostly blueberries. A spur trail to the right, just before the summit, leads to an observation point surrounded by rugged, rocky terrain. **You can help save this fragile ecosystem: Stay on the trail and within the rock wall at the top to protect unique plant species.**

■ The Snowball Mountain Trail

is a moderate to strenuous 8-mile round trip and affords beautiful views. Beware of poison ivy and stinging nettle bordering narrow portions of the trail. To reach the trailhead, start at the Mountains-to-Sea Trail crossing at the Picnic area road and continue south a few hundred feet. The Snowball Trail turns to the right (NW) off of the MTS Trail, passes through a mixed-hardwood forest and follows the ridges with views to both sides. Some heath areas are encountered as the trail continues up the main ridge over Snowball Mountain. From the second rock face, and 30 paces on a spur trail to the left, Hawkbill Rock provides good views of Reems Creek Valley to the west. After joining a rugged road and reaching a turn-around area, keep to the left-most road and continue to Little Snowball Mountain and remnants of a fire tower.

MOUNT PISGAH

MP 407 - 412



Trails of various lengths and difficulty traverse this area full of natural and historical treasures. Take a leisurely stroll through the surrounding forests or enjoy the challenge of a full day's hike. Whichever you choose, the experience is certain to be rewarding.

■ Mt. Pisgah Trail

1.6 miles to the summit, begins at the far end of the Mt. Pisgah Parking Area. With an ascent of 712 feet, the latter half of the moderate to strenuous hike is fairly steep and rocky. The trail passes through a Northern Red Oak forest on the way to the summit, which offers a spectacular view including the French Broad River Valley and Shining Rock Wilderness.

■ Buck Spring Trail

(1.1 miles) is a popular section of the Mountains-To-Sea Trail between the Buck Spring Gap Parking Area and the Pisgah Inn. This easy walk passes by the site of the historic Buck Spring Lodge as well as provides beautiful mountain views and chances to see colorful wildflowers. The Laurel Mountain and Pilot Rock Trails are spurs off the Buck Spring Trail that provide more adventurous hikers longer descents into the Pisgah National Forest.

■ Shut-In Trail

(16.3 miles), a moderate to strenuous hike, begins at the Mt. Pisgah Parking Area and descends 3,681 feet to Bent Creek near NC 191.

■ Frying Pan Fire Tower Trail

(0.7 mile to summit) begins at Milepost 409.6 at a gravel U.S. Forest Service Road. This moderate hike climbs steadily up the road through a high elevation mixed forest and is particularly well known for its blooming wildflowers in spring and summer. The Frying Pan Fire Tower greets you at the end of your hike. While the top of the tower is not accessible, climb up the several flights of steps to get great views of the surrounding area, including magnificent Cold Mountain. For a longer hike, start at the Mount Pisgah Campground entrance for a 2.1 mile one-way hike.



BICYCLING THE PARKWAY

The Blue Ridge Parkway, designed as a scenic leisure road for motor vehicles, offers 469 miles of picturesque travel across Virginia and North Carolina with elevation ranging from 649 to 6,047 feet. Bicyclists should be aware that the Parkway does not have designated bike lanes.

Use extreme caution and be prepared for:

- changing weather conditions, regardless of the season
- long distances between developed areas
- camping, lodging and other services vary seasonally

BICYCLING REGULATIONS

- Bicycle riders must comply with all applicable state and federal motor vehicle regulations.
- Bicycles may be ridden only on paved road surfaces and parking areas.
- Bicycles, including mountain bikes, may not be ridden on trails or walkways.
- Bicycle speed must be reasonable for control with regard to traffic, weather, road and light conditions.
- Bicycle operators must exhibit a white light or reflector visible at least 500 feet to the front and a red light or reflector visible at least 200 feet to the rear during periods of low visibility, between the hours of sunset and sunrise, or while traveling through a tunnel.
- Bicycles must be ridden single file and well to the right-hand side of the road, except when passing or turning left.

FOR SAFE BICYCLING

- Wear a bicycle helmet. North Carolina law requires it for persons 16 and under and many Virginia counties do as well, but it's the safe thing to do regardless of your age.
- Be sure your bicycle is in good condition. Carry a spare tube and tools for minor repairs.
- Wear high visibility clothing. It sets you apart from the scenery and makes you more visible to motorists.
- Avoid the Parkway during periods of low visibility. Fog and rain may occur unpredictably. Reschedule your trip for better weather or follow lower elevation routes until weather conditions improve.
- Temperatures vary greatly along the Parkway. Wear your clothing in layers.
- Safe drinking water is available on a seasonal basis at all picnic areas, campgrounds, concession operations, and visitor centers. Water from streams and springs is unsafe for drinking unless you purify it.
- Make an honest evaluation of your abilities before beginning a bicycle trip on the Parkway. In some sections, you will climb over one thousand feet in just a few miles.
- When cycling in a group, adjust your spacing to allow motor vehicles to pass safely.
- Exercise caution when riding through tunnels. There are 25 tunnels in North Carolina and 1 tunnel in Virginia.



MILEPOST	MAJOR UPHILLS		MAJOR UPHILLS		
	TOTAL ELEV CLIMBED	MILEPOST* ELEV CHANGE	TOTAL ELEV CLIMBED	MILEPOST* ELEV CHANGE	
0-24	1450 ft.	13.7-10.7 563 ft.	2810 ft.	0-3 391 ft.	
		9.2-8.5 222 ft.		4.7-8.5 1100 ft.	
		4.7-3.0 300 ft.		9.2-10.7 322 ft.	
				18.5-23.0 785 ft.	
24.0-48.0	2670 ft.	46.4-43.9 627 ft.	1742 ft.	37.4-38.8 229 ft.	
		40.0-38.8 331 ft.		42.0-43.9 570 ft.	
		37.4-34.0 951 ft.		47.0-48.0 177 ft.	
48.0-63.0	1870 ft.	63.0-49.3 1852 ft.	250 ft.	48.0-49.3 228 ft.	
63.0-76.7	0		3305 ft.	63.0-76.7 3305 ft.	
76.7-96.0	2865 ft.	93.1-91.6 374 ft.	1360 ft.	89.1-91.6 569 ft.	
		89.1-87.3 634 ft.		93.1-95.4 428 ft.	
		85.6-84.7 230 ft.			
		83.5-76.7 1,490 ft.			
96.0-120.4	2680 ft.	115.0-113.0 280 ft.	1657 ft.	118.1-120.4 426 ft.	
		106.0-103.6 500 ft.			
		102.5-99.8 820 ft.			
120.4	Mill Mountain Spur- length to summit is 3.1 miles. Elevation climb from Parkway to summit 580 ft. elevation climb from summit to Parkway 330 ft.				
120.4-144.0	2006 ft.	140.1-139.3 229 ft.	3200 ft.	127.0-132.5 1400 ft.	
		136.0-134.9 285 ft.		134.0-134.9 195 ft.	
		124.6-123.1 320 ft.		136.4-138.2 275 ft.	
121.4-120.4	265 ft.				
144.0-168.0	1840 ft.	159.4-157.6 389 ft.	2530 ft.	150.6-152.1 278 ft.	
		150.6-149.8 226 ft.		157.0-157.6 200 ft.	
				164.7-168.0 830 ft.	
168.0-192.0	2455 ft.	189.4-188.7 220 ft.	1745 ft.	169.5-170.1 260 ft.	
		175.1-171.9 575 ft.		176.2-177.0 212 ft.	
		168.9-168.0 185 ft.		186.6-188.8 360 ft.	
192.0-216.0	2225 ft.	215.6-214.0 260 ft.	2047 ft.	195.0-196.2 235 ft.	
		210.6-209.4 220 ft.		197.6-198.7 210 ft.	
		199.4-198.7 165 ft.		200.5-201.5 335 ft.	
216.0-240.0	1566 ft.	240.0-239.3 160 ft.	2530 ft.	216.6-217.7 240 ft.	
		238.5-237.2 270 ft.		231.3-233.1 550 ft.	
		220.8-220.1 205 ft.		233.7-235.2 280 ft.	
				235.8-236.9 365 ft.	
240.0-264.6	2625 ft.	257.8-256.8 200 ft.	2680 ft.	240.0-240.8 170 ft.	
		248.0-244.5 495 ft.		249.0-249.8 235 ft.	
		243.8-242.9 270 ft.		251.3-252.8 300 ft.	
		242.4-241.5 300 ft.		263.6-264.6 360 ft.	

Major Uphills and Elevations Climbed - These do not include climbs on spur roads, in campgrounds, or picnic areas except where noted. (Statistics courtesy of Tom DeVaughn, Troutville, Virginia) *This figure represents the total amount of uphill climb within the given milepost.

MILEPOST	MAJOR UPHILLS		MAJOR UPHILLS		
	TOTAL ELEV CLIMBED	MILEPOST* ELEV CHANGE	TOTAL ELEV CLIMBED	MILEPOST* ELEV CHANGE	
264.6-288.0	3050 ft.	285.2-283.8 400 ft.	3,160 ft.	265.2-266.8 270 ft.	
		279.6-278.8 270 ft.		269.8-271.1 330 ft.	
		276.4-273.1 910 ft.		271.4-273.1 575 ft.	
		269.8-268.6 315 ft.		276.4-277.4 375 ft.	
		268.1-266.8 380 ft.		281.7-282.4 280 ft.	
				282.7-283.8 255 ft.	
				286.0-287.8 500 ft.	
288.0-312.0	2185 ft.	309.9-306.5 460 ft.	2210 ft.	288.7-289.9 250 ft.	
		305.6-305.0 200 ft.		291.8-293.8 400 ft.	
		295.8-293.8 555 ft.		298.6-302.1 1005 ft.	
		291.8-289.9 275 ft.			
312.0-336.3	3120 ft.	336.3-335.7 215 ft.	2705 ft.	316.4-318.2 380 ft.	
		327.4-325.8 290 ft.		318.5-320.7 590 ft.	
		325.0-320.7 1210 ft.		330.9-332.1 410 ft.	
		316.4-312.4 520 ft.		332.6-334.5 545 ft.	
336.3-358.5	1705 ft.	351.9-349.9 565 ft.	4060 ft.	336.3-338.9 540 ft.	
		334.1-341.8 530 ft.		345.4-349.9 1480 ft.	
		339.8-338.9 260 ft.		351.9-355.0 920 ft.	
				355.4-358.5 520 ft.	
355.4	Spur Road to Mt. Mitchell is 4.8 miles in length - Total Elevation climb from Parkway is 1,390 ft.				
358.5-384.0	4265 ft.	383.5-376.7 1135 ft.	680 ft.	361.1-364.1 500 ft.	
		375.3-364.1 2535 ft.			
		361.1-358.5 540 ft.			
384.0-408.0	850 ft.	No major uphill	3705 ft.	393.8-396.4 920 ft.	
				397.3-399.7 430 ft.	
				400.3-405.5 965 ft.	
				405.7-407.7 745 ft.	
408.0-431.4	1835 ft.	426.5-424.8 325 ft.	2775 ft.	416.8-420.2 1100 ft.	
		423.2-421.6 250 ft.		423.2-424.8 230 ft.	
		415.6-413.2 385 ft.		426.5-428.2 405 ft.	
		411.9-409.6 400 ft.		429.0-431.4 600 ft.	
431.4-469.1	7470 ft.	469.1-462.2 2240 ft.	2450 ft.	443.1-451.2 2450 ft.	
		461.6-458.9 1000 ft.		455.7-458.9 810 ft.	
		455.7-451.2 1480 ft.			
		443.1-435.5 2020 ft.			
		433.3-431.4 475 ft.			
458.2	Heintooga From Balsam Mountain		To Balsam Mountain		
	Spur Road	3.6-1.0 860 ft.		0.0-1.0 255 ft.	
TOTAL	UPHILL CLIMB NORTH - 48,722 FT.		UPHILL CLIMB SOUTH - 48,601 FT.		

PLANNING EXTENDED TRIPS

- Some Parkway campgrounds and services are located too far apart for convenient cycling.
- Camping is permitted only at established campgrounds. In some areas, U.S. Forest Service, State Park, and private campgrounds are within easy distance of the Parkway. However, many operate on a seasonal basis.
- Food and lodging services are also available along and adjacent to the Parkway. Most operate seasonally.
- To assist in planning your trip, consult the Parkway map and the Parkway Directory.
- Carry a first aid kit when possible.
- Contact a Ranger before leaving a motor vehicle parked overnight on the Parkway.

Use the Overlooks to Enjoy “America’s Favorite Drive”



The Blue Ridge Parkway, often called “America’s Favorite Drive,” is beautiful, but requires extra care while driving. The two-lane road passes along ridge lines and through valleys that take you from 649 feet to over 6000 feet in elevation. Be alert for rapidly changing road conditions and always be conscious of your speed. Together we can make the Parkway “America’s Safest Drive.”



Law Enforcement Rangers respond to over 320 accidents each year with one third of those resulting in injuries. Keep the following in mind to make your Parkway visit the safest possible...

- Avoid in-vehicle distractions, put phones and other devices away and out of view.
- Watch for steep grades leading into tight corners where speed can quickly take you off course.
- Be aware of the Parkway’s narrow road shoulders where edge rutting on soft soils creates wheel-drop hazards, especially to motorcycles and bicyclists.
- Focus on the drive and roadway first, and then use designed pullouts and overlooks to enjoy the view.
- Wildlife such as deer and bear are common along the road, especially at dawn and dusk. Slow down during these times to avoid hitting wildlife.
- Pull off the road and into any of the 400 overlooks to safely enjoy the view.

“Enjoy the view, but watch the road” is our way to remind you to have a safe drive down the Blue Ridge Parkway.”

FOOD, LODGING, AND ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

There are many options for lodging and dining without leaving the Parkway. Concession operated services include:

- **Peaks of Otter Lodge & Restaurant • MP86**
(year round)- www.peaksofotter.com or 800-542-5927
- **Mabry Mill Restaurant • MP176**
(seasonal operation) - www.mabrymillrestaurant.com or 276-952-2947
- **Northwest Trading Post • MP258**
(seasonal operation) – www.sallymaesgifts.com or call 336-982-2543
- **Mount Pisgah Inn & Restaurant • MP 408.6**
(seasonal operation) – www.pisgahinn.com or 828-235-8228

The Blue Ridge Parkway is an integral part of the region through which it passes and the adjacent communities are as much a part of your experience here as the drive itself. Take every opportunity to explore the region, get acquainted with the people, and enjoy the Blue Ridge hospitality.

Cities such as Asheville, Boone, and Blowing Rock in North Carolina and Roanoke, Bedford, and Waynesboro in Virginia have full amenities. The smaller towns may be more to your liking as well, so don’t overlook them during your travels.

Gas Availability

No gasoline is available on the Parkway. Gas is available not far off the Parkway at any of these US or State Highway intersections

(subject to change without notice):

VIRGINIA

US 250	MP 0.....	less than 3 miles west
VA 56	MP 27.....	less than 3 miles east
US 60	MP 45.6.....	less than 5 miles west
US 501	MP 63.7.....	less than 2 miles south
VA 43	MP 90.9.....	less than 5 miles north
US 460	MP 106.....	less than 4 miles west
VA 24	MP 112.2.....	less than 2 miles east or west
US 220	MP 121.4.....	less than 5 miles north
US 58	MP 177.7.....	less than 1 mile east
US 52	MP 199.4.....	less than 1 mile north
VA 89	MP 215.8.....	less than 8 miles north

NORTH CAROLINA

US 21	MP 229.7.....	less than 8 miles west
NC 18	MP 248.1.....	less than 3 miles west
NC 16	MP 261.2.....	less than 12 miles west
US 321	MP 291.8.....	less than 2 miles north or south
NC 181	MP 312.....	less than 3 miles north
NC 226	MP 330.9.....	less than 3 miles north
US 70	MP 382.5.....	less than 2 miles east or west
US 74A	MP 384.7.....	less than 3 miles south
US 25	MP 388.8.....	less than 1 mile south
		less than 3 miles north
NC 191	MP 393.6.....	less than 3 miles north
US 276	MP 411.8.....	less than 10 miles north
US 74/23	MP 443.1.....	less than 3 miles east
US 19	MP 455.7.....	less than 3 miles east
US 441	MP 469.1.....	less than 5 miles south

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The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation is the primary non-profit fundraising partner and a trusted steward of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Through the Foundation, you can provide support for initiatives along the 469-mile route, including historical and cultural preservation, environmental protection, visitor amenities, and educational outreach.



www.brpfoundation.org